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**A Comparative Study of the Teaching of Writing in English and  
Berber classes. The case of Abane Ramdane Secondary School in  
Tizi-Ouzou (Algeria)**

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## ***Dedications***

*I dedicate this modest work to*

*My dear parents Dalila and Ali*

*My little daughter Elie*

*To my sister Kamelia, my brother Massil*

*All my grand family, aunts and uncles*

*This is especially for you my husband.*

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## **Abstract**

The present research attempts to investigate the teaching of the writing skill in English and Berber classes. The study takes place in Abane Ramdane secondary school in Tizi-Ouzou (Algeria) including third year teachers as the case of the study. For the sake of collecting data, an interview is conducted with six third year level teachers and a questionnaire is handed to fifty (50) of their students. The results of the investigation are analyzed using the mixed method research, that is; the qualitative data are interpreted using qualitative content Analysis (QCA) and the quantitative ones are analyzed drawing on the rule of three. As far as the results are concerned, it is reported that the teachers of Berber and English apply various strategies to teach their students writing; among these strategies group work, extensive reading, free writing, summarizing etc. Also, it is found that the teachers of Berber use almost the same writing techniques as English language teachers. Besides, the present investigation is framed by Hillocks' theory about teaching writing as a reflective practice, thus the discussion of the results draws mainly on the mentioned theory including the analysis of the notions of discussion and reflection which are essential principles in Hillocks' theory. To conclude, it is recommended for researchers in the field of languages to deal with the Berber language in their studies since there is no much research concerning the teaching of this language in Algerian schools.

## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

- ❖ EFL : English as a Foreign Language
- ❖ ELT : English Language Teaching
- ❖ Hp : Hypothesis
- ❖ L1 : First Language
- ❖ L2 : Second Language
- ❖ QCA : Qualitative Content Analysis

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## **General Introduction**

## **General Introduction**

### **Statement of the Problem**

Because learning a foreign language demands the development of several competencies and various skills, many students face difficulties when coming to grip with this enterprise. Educators regard writing as one of the core stones of the educational program at all levels of education, and as a crucial skill needed to excel in any language. Teaching writing is a complex matter. In this regard, Hedge states that writing is not only the production of accurate and complete sentences, but also a whole process of learners' guidance so that they deliver entire pieces of communication, connect and develop ideas; information or arguments for a given audience (2005). To fulfil this task, a range of approaches to the teaching of writing are put in teachers' hands.

Due to its high importance in the teaching and learning process as well as in being a primordial part of engaging in professional, social, and civic life, writing has been the topic of interest for many scholars: Brown (2001), Hedge (2005), Graham and Perin (2007), Cavkaytar and Yasar (2008), Benaissa (2010), and Gray (2015) etc. For instance, Brown (2001) and Hedge (2005) share the same view about the complexity of writing. They state that writing is more than graphs, and that it requires much effort including a good organization, a high level of accuracy, a painstaking choice of vocabulary etc. Hillocks (1984), who is also interested in the teaching of the writing skill, agrees on the importance of writing. He claims that writing should be taught drawing on the process approach because of its relevant instructional methods of teaching. However, what is to be questioned about all these studies is that nearly, all these mentioned scholars have dealt with the teaching of writing of English as a foreign language. None of them has carried out a comparative study between English writing teaching and some other language to find out the different strategies used to teach it.

In Algeria, four main languages are taught: Arabic, French, Berber, and English. Yet, it is important to note that the scope of our research work is restricted to the comparison of Berber and English in terms of the strategies applied to teach writing. Besides, the choice of the two cited languages is not hazardous. It is the fruit of one personal motivation, which is to shed light on the Berber language, which incited us to conduct a comparative study between our mother tongue that is Berber, and the English language that is the foreign language that we are currently studying at university. The purpose of the investigation is to discover if there are common strategies applied in teaching writing in these two totally different languages regarding their structure and their different status in the Algerian country. Moreover, to draw valid conclusions from this research work, we have selected third year secondary school teachers as our population of study; simply because it is at this level that teachers vary in the use of the writing strategies so that to provide their learners with a maximum of instruction about language and the way to develop their writing competencies to make them ready for a totally new experience at university.

### **Aims and Significance of the Study**

The present work aims, first and foremost, at throwing light on the implemented strategies in the teaching of writing for both English and Berber. The participants are secondary school third year teachers. Moreover, two objectives are targeted in this research: the first is to investigate what are the writing techniques that these teachers implement during their lessons, and to check whether the teachers of Berber use the same strategies as the teachers of English.

Regarding the significance of this study, writing is not only considered as a subject or a module, but it is included in many aspects of life such as in professional matters, social matters and even personal matters. People who master writing skills seem to have an easier

and more advanced life. Furthermore, as far as third year students are concerned, the Baccalaureate exams of English and Berber are written ones. Most importantly, this work is a comparative study which is intended to bring some new insights to the field of teaching writing, since it is to our present state of knowledge, the first study, at the University of Mouloud Mammeri, to compare the teaching of writing in English and Berber.

## **Research Questions and Hypotheses**

Considering the objective of this research which is to investigate the teaching of writing strategies in both English and Berber classes, three essential questions are asked:

1. What strategies do teachers of Berber and English employ to enhance their pupils' writing skill?
2. Do Berber language teachers use the same strategies as English language teachers?
3. What is pupils' view towards the teaching of writing in both Berber and English?

In an attempt to answer these research questions, a number of hypotheses are suggested:

Hp1: There are many strategies used by teachers of English and Berber to enhance their learners' writing abilities such as reading and group work.

Hp2: Yes, teachers of both languages use the same techniques to teach writing.

Hp3: No, teachers of both languages do not use the same techniques to teach writing. .

Hp4: Pupils' view towards the teaching strategies of writing is positive in both Berber and English.

## **Research Techniques and Methodology**

Our investigation seeks to examine the strategies implemented by the teachers of Berber and English and to check whether they use the same techniques to enhance their

pupils' writing abilities. Thus, a mixed-research method consisting in qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection and data analysis is adopted. A questionnaire is designed for secondary school third year students and a structured interview is conducted with their teachers. The qualitative data are subjected to a Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA), and this includes the results gathered from the interview and the open-ended questions from the questionnaire. Conversely, the quantitative data are analyzed relying on a descriptive statistical method using the rule of three so that to convert the numbers into percentages. As far as the theoretical framework is concerned, our research study relies on Hillocks' (1995) theory about teaching writing as a reflective practice.

## **Structure of the Dissertation**

This dissertation follows the traditional complex model. It includes four chapters, as well as a General Introduction and a General Conclusion.

The General Introduction aims at communicating the importance of our investigation; it consists in the statement of the problem, aims and significance of the study, research questions and hypotheses, research techniques and methodology, and the structure of the dissertation. The first chapter is devoted to the review of literature. It aims at reviewing and evaluating previous scholarly works in relation to our research topic. The second chapter is entitled 'Research Design', and it introduces and describes the data collection and data analysis tools. The third chapter is called 'Presentation of the Findings' and it serves to display the data obtained from our participants. The fourth chapter is the discussion one. It seeks to analyze and discuss the findings of the investigation, and this is in relation to the research questions and the suggested hypotheses. Last and not least, a General Conclusion is included to restate and summarize the studied points, as well as to give some recommendations.

## **Chapter 01: Review of the Literature**

## **Introduction**

This chapter is entitled ‘review of the literature’. It seeks to review how scholars define writing and to explore the approaches and strategies they suggest to teach and enhance this primordial skill in two languages: English and Berber. This chapter is divided into two parts: the first part gives some definitions concerning English as a foreign language, Berber as native language, the writing skill, as well as some approaches to teaching writing. The second part introduces the theoretical framework upon which our research is based, and this includes Hillocks’ theory (1995) about teaching writing as a reflective practice in the middle and secondary schools.

### **1. English as a Foreign Language**

A language is considered foreign when it is largely taught in the classroom and not used for communication outside (Kramer and Catalano, 2015). Foreign language teaching and learning refers to the teaching and learning of a non-native language outside its original environment. In other words, it is the teaching and learning of a language which is neither a first language nor a second one. For instance, Spanish is a foreign language in the United States of America (USA), English is a foreign language in Algeria, and French is a foreign language in the United Kingdom, etc. Learning a foreign language is very beneficial to learners because it enables them to communicate easily and effectively in the target language; as they are given the opportunity to discover other countries culture and styles of life without travelling abroad.

English is considered as the primary international language of technology, business, education, and international diplomacy. The English language has a very old and interesting history. Baugh and Cable (1978) say that the Renaissance, the expansion of the British

Empire, and growth of industry, economy, science, and literature have all played a role to promote the English language to what it is today. Today, the English language has become the common means of communication between the peoples of different nations (Verghese, C.P. 1989). Hence, it is taught as a foreign language in many areas all over the world. In Algeria, the teaching of English holds a respectful position; it is compulsory from the first year of the middle school until the university. The main objective of teaching English as a foreign language in Algeria is, first, to utilize it for communication, then it is thought to be useful in professional life, and also in continuing further studies abroad (Naved, 2015). Thus, by the end of their learning processes, the English language learners have to master four essential skills: reading, listening, speaking and writing. The Algerian Ministry of Education states in its document that the pupils of the secondary school have to achieve some learning outcomes in their three years of learning, it claims that the reason behind ELT is to make our society integrate within the modern world and adapt the movement of globalization (2006). All in all, EFL receives high interest among Algerian educators who are absolutely aware of its global prestige.

After dealing with the teaching of English as a foreign language in the Algerian context, it is worth dealing with the Berber language which is an official language in Algeria and the mother tongue of Amazighs. This is because there is much confusion about how this language is viewed in the same country.

## **2. Berber as a Native Language**

Berber languages, also known as Amazigh languages, are a family of similar and closely related languages and dialects spoken by the Berber people (Thompson, 2017). The Berber languages are very ancient ones, and they belong to the Afro-asiatic language family. This language family, which is also called 'Hamito-Semitic' family, is the largest language



family of northern Africa. It includes more than 300 million speakers. Berber is spoken in many areas in Africa such as Morocco, Libya, Algeria, as well as in Egypt etc (Thompson, 2017).

In Algeria, besides Arabic, Berber is now an official language. This is the result of continuous and considerable intellectual efforts to make the Amazigh language accepted as a national and official language. It is spoken by 25% Algerians, but it remains marginalized (ibid). Kishore Singh (cited in Chaif, 2015), the United Nations Special Reporter in Algeria, states that Berber teaching is a serious problem in the Algerian education. He further argues that more human and financial resources could be attributed to the progressive teaching of Tamazight at all levels in Algeria. In fact, in 1990, the Department of the Amazigh language and culture was opened, at the University of Tizi Ouzou. One year later, another Amazigh department was opened at the University of Bejaia. In 2010, similar departments saw light in Bouira and Batna. Today, Berber is introduced to primary, middle, and secondary schools and thousands pupils study it and enjoy learning it. However, hard work and much effort are needed to generalize the teaching and use of the Berber language. The Algerian Education Minister Nouria Benghabrit (cited in Chaif, 2015) claims that in order to gradually generalize the teaching of Tamazight language, all human resources need to be mobilized. Berber is, then, a part of the Algerian culture as well as of the Northern African identity and, thus, it should be preserved and taught to the coming generations.

Regarding the teaching of writing strategies in native languages or in L1, many studies have been conducted and different positions were adopted. For instance, Matsumoto (1995) conducted a study in Japan where he compared the writing strategies used in Japanese (the native language) and in English (the foreign language). The result of this study was that the native speakers in Japan use the same strategies in both their native language and in EFL, and the scholar concludes that this is effective and that L2 learners have no problems with writing

in English. Silva (1993) is another scholar who conducted a similar study in USA, However; he did not reach the same results as Matsumoto (1995). Silva concluded that there are different strategies used in writing in L1 and in L2 and he adds that learners write more effectively in their L1 rather than in L2 where they face many difficulties especially in generating ideas and in structure.

In the present study, we will try to investigate whether the writing strategies used to teach L1 (Berber) are similar to the ones used to teach L2, that is, English.

### **3. Definition of the Writing Skill**

Writing is important, but at the same time; it is very complex. This is actually the reason why scholars do not agree on one definition to this concept. For instance, Brown (2001:335) says, “*writing is as different from speaking as walking from swimming*”. Indeed, speaking is less complex than writing since speaking is spontaneous and does not require a high degree of correctness as writing. Another definition is given by Hedge (1988) who claims that writing is more than producing complete and correct sentences. In fact, the writing skill is much more than mastering grammar, vocabulary, and phonetics. It is rather the ability to convey clearly ideas to an audience and help them understand easily what is meant.

In addition to the above definitions of writing, Weigle (2002), in his turn, views that writing is a social and cultural phenomenon and that it is a cognitive activity. In fact, writing takes place in a social context since it is a means of communication among people in society and it includes different situations such as writing a letter of apology, writing an invitation, writing a discourse to celebrate international days etc. Besides, this skill is a cognitive activity because writers make much effort to plan and edit their work and this demands high cognitive abilities; in other words, writing goes through many levels of thinking. For instance, when a president prepares his discourse, he has first to plan for the content of the discourse, and then

he has to think about what would influence his audience, and once again he thinks about the structure of his writing and checks if it is convenient, that is formal enough. As a matter of fact, Weigle's definition to writing is the most appropriate one because it deals with writing from both cognitive and social aspects. To conclude, enhancing the writing skill is not an easy task because the writer has to be patient and perseverant.

#### **4. Approaches to Teaching Writing**

Due to its high importance and usefulness, writing is given much attention. A range of approaches are put in teachers' hands to provide their students with a better learning of this skill. Two major approaches have dominated the practice of teaching writing for many years. These are the product and process approaches. Besides, another approach entitled 'genre approach' came into existence in the last few years.

##### **4.1. The Product Approach**

Parson (1985) states that the product approach focuses primarily on the form and correctness of the piece of writing. In other words, in a product oriented-approach written composition, students are supposed to pay attention to grammar, vocabulary, and spelling. In a typical writing lesson, students are given a text which is considered as a model, they read it, discover the new words, and then try to imitate the model to produce something. To illustrate, a teacher gives his pupils a text about a family that goes to seaside in holidays, the pupils read that text, familiarize with new words such as beach, sand, etc and try to produce sentences using those new words. At the end, the teacher asks his learners to write about their own holidays. In this sense, Pincas (1982) interprets the product writing lesson in four stages: familiarization, controlled writing, guided writing, and free writing. Familiarization, the first stage, is the fact of giving texts to students so that they familiarize with the aspect to be

studied. Then, in the second stage is controlled writing. The learners try to produce at least one sentence about the discovered patterns under the teacher's guidance. In the next stage, guided writing, the students are less dependent, and try to prepare a piece of writing, but this is always under the teacher's supervision. In the last stage, the learners are released to make a free writing using what they have learned. To sum it up, the product approach views the written production as the product of the acquisition of a linguistic knowledge and the imitation of a drill work given by the teacher. As one can notice, no importance is given to content and this is the reason why further approaches emerged.

## **4.2. The Process Approach**

Contrary to the product approach, the process approach gives more attention to the linguistic skills rather than to the linguistic knowledge. The process-oriented approach highlights skills such as drafting, editing, etc and prewriting activities such as brainstorming, mapping, listing, etc. According to Tompkins (2004), the writing process is a 'road map' through which students' thoughts and actions are monitored from the beginning of the writing to its production. For example, if learners want to write about their experience in the middle school using the process approach, they should bear in their minds that they have to start by writing down all their middle school experiences on a draft, and then they have to revise their ideas so that to edit them, and finally publish them.

Another definition of the process approach to writing is given by Hillocks (1984) who defines the process approach as the set of stages which are followed in any written piece. These stages include the following:

### **4.2.1 The Prewriting Stage**

The prewriting stage is the stage where the writer plans for his writing. Indeed, in this phase, the writer makes decisions about his work. He collects information about his topic using prewriting activities such as drawing, reading; listening to tapes and records, conducting library research, etc. As an example, if a teacher asks his students to write an essay about the role of women in the Algerian society, the students can discuss the topic with their friends, read about it in the library, or even listen to news. What matters is that the learners gather enough information to pave the way for the drafting stage. Parson (1985) states that students who do prewriting activities are likely to be more successful in their writing than those who do not employ them. In fact, a good plan is necessary to succeed one's piece of writing. A writer needs to brainstorm about his topic, read, or conduct research about it; this would greatly help him deliver ideas and write more effectively.

### **4.2.2. The Drafting Stage**

In this stage, writers start to deliver their first ideas. They try to connect all that they found in their research in order to make some meaningful piece of writing without giving much importance to mechanics (Cotton 1988). In fact, the writer in this phase does not hesitate to write all the ideas he has in mind, he targets content rather than structure. Using the previous example about the role of women in the Algerian society, learners may write down ideas such as women's role is important in the Algerian society, women are under-estimated in the Algerian society, women and men are given equal position in the Algerian society etc. Then in further stages, they can select the ideas that they want to develop, and they dispel the remaining ones. The draft belongs only to its writer and it is the starting point of all pieces of writing.

### **4.2.3. The Revising Stage**

This stage is concerned with making necessary changes in writing. Additions as well as deletions are made at the level of syntax, semantics, organization etc. The revision stage is the most productive of superior final products if it is supported with teacher's input or fellow students' ones (Glatthorn 1981). Indeed, in the revision stage, one starts to care about the meaning and structure of his writing. He re-reads his ideas in order to delete what is irrelevant to his topic and add the missed ideas. He checks as well the structure of his work and starts to improve it (Cotton 1988). To illustrate with a concrete example, students preparing their Master's dissertation make many deletions and additions concerning their first draft. After, consulting their supervisors, they may add ideas missing to their work as they may omit some others that are irrelevant to their work. The revising phase is very important because it is there that the writer starts to prepare his work for publication.

### **4.2.4. The Editing Stage**

The refinement of the piece of writing is made in this stage. The writer, here, checks correctness and gives attention to the aesthetics of the work so that to publish the last product to the audience (Cotton 1988). To illustrate, Master's students, after their viva do further corrections including the style, the diction, the references etc, In this stage, the writer makes the final touches to his work to make it finally public.

### **4.2.5. The Publishing Stage**

The publication of someone's work is a source of a great pleasure for him. Thus, it is a real opportunity for the writer to give the best to his audience. Sommers and Collins (1984) and other researchers claim that students' motivation and achievement are fostered when their works are published. This is absolutely true because learners feel that they are responsible for

the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of their audience, so they try to make their writing as good as possible so that to please the audience .To provide a concrete example, when publishing his/her Master's dissertation, a Master's student feels proud of himself/herself because he/she finally shares his/her ideas with the rest of the world and contributes to the existing literature .To put it in a nutshell, the process approach is said to be more effective than the product approach because of its five operational stages which are as a map that shows learners where to go and how to get there. In other words, applying the process approach makes writing easy and successful.

### **4.3. The Genre Approach**

The genre approach is a new theory to teaching writing in ELT. This approach is said to be much similar to the product oriented one since it focuses on the linguistic knowledge and writing mechanics. However, in the genre approach differs in the fact that it views writing in relation to its social context, that is to say; it classifies written texts into genres and each genre is linked to a specific situation (Flowerdew 1993: 307). In addition to this, Swales states that the central aspect of situation is purpose. He says that a genre is a set of 'communicative events' intended for a given audience which shares the same 'communicative purposes'. Besides, Hedge (1988) and Martin (1993) claim that in addition to purpose other features such as the subject matter, the pattern of organization, and the relationship between the writer and the audience are very important and influential elements on situation. Regarding the teaching of writing, genre-oriented approach teachers give first their students a text on a specific genre, then the students analyze the model and do some guided practice on it, and finally try to produce a piece of writing on the studied genre. In short, the genre approach focuses on writing mechanics giving much attention to the linguistic skills and the social context of writing (Flowerdew, 1993). All in all, the product approach, the process approach, and the

genre one all have positive and negative points, so they should be considered as complementary approaches and writing teachers should use them in a careful and clever way. After defining the main concepts in relation to the topic of the teaching of writing in Berber and English, the theoretical framework, which is Hillocks' theory, is introduced.

## **5. The Theoretical Framework: Hillocks' theory**

There are various definitions and theories about writing and its teaching. Yet, our study is based upon one theory; it is George Hillocks' theory of teaching writing as a reflective practice in college and secondary school (1995). To start, Hillocks defines writing as a 'recursive process', i.e. writing is a repeated process and each piece of writing is linked to a previous one. It is all about reproducing ideas, reconsidering them, and generating new notions. The main point in Hillocks' theory is that writing is strongly connected with thinking. He claims that Writing is producing meaning, and that writing is all about thinking. The scholar believes that critical thinking is demanded in every aspect of teaching, and that teachers should question, evaluate, and revise each time their teaching experiences and methods about teaching written composition. This means that teaching should occur in a constructive way and teachers have to observe their students critically and think continuously about adequate strategies to teach them writing effectively. Hence, teachers need to assess their students regularly so that to sort out their deficiencies in writing and adapt appropriate techniques to teach the writing skill. Moreover, this writer argues that the best approach to teach writing is the process oriented approach and that the product-oriented one is no longer effective to form good writers. He explains that the product approach views writing as a product of the students' acquisition of grammar rules and vocabulary, without giving much consideration to meaning. Conversely, the process approach, or as Hillocks calls it 'the



composing process', gives much importance to content and meaning. The process is divided into five stages: prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and publication, and in each stage the students are active and productive.

Furthermore, Hillocks (1995) claims that while research and theory about writing are important, all activities must be specific and applicable to writing learners, therefore; he suggests the so called 'gateway activities' which are a kind of activities that aim at moving students beyond their present levels. These activities include inquiry, learning about discourse, processes of writing, and practice. They allow students to engage in more complex tasks. For example, when the teacher gives his students a group work and asks them to write an essay on how third year pupils should cope with anxiety before the baccalaureate exam, the students have first to think about solutions to get rid of stress, then they have to discuss those solutions to select finally what to include in the essay . Moreover, teachers do regularly check their students performance and interaction so that to make these activities more effective.

Another important point in Hillocks' theory is the 'dialectical process'. According to Hillocks, the dialectical process must be an important part of environments for learning writing. He says, *"Writing is a chief means of extending, shaping, and rethinking that inquiry and carrying on the dialectical processes involved"* (1995: 212). This notion means that debate and discussion among students are essential to enhance their writing skills. Finally, this scholar states that continuous thinking and discussion do not only foster writing competencies, but also promote the self to generate a new person. That is to say, a person who has the tendency to write reads a lot, discovers each time new ideas, and innovates his thinking to promote his intellectual abilities and become a better person. Therefore, the dialectical process must be taken seriously because its removal can lead to undesirable results. To sum up, Hillocks made his own touch in the field of the teaching of writing, and brought

new insights into teaching writing as a reflective practice and this would be very helpful to teachers in their writing lessons.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has shed light on the basic concepts involved in the teaching of writing. It has reviewed previous scholarly works in relation to our topic, and it has presented the theoretical framework of our study which is Hillocks' theory of teaching writing as a reflective practice.

## **Chapter 02: Research Design**

## **Introduction**

This chapter is devoted to the research design of the current study. First, it describes the context and the participants of the study. It also depicts the procedures of data collection tools which consist of a questionnaire administered to third year pupils of the secondary school Abane Ramdane, Tizi-Ouzou, and an interview conducted with three teachers of English and three teachers of Berber in the same context. Finally, it explains the procedures of data analysis consisting in a statistical method labeled the ‘the rule of three’ used to analyze the quantitative data obtained from the close-ended questions of the questionnaire. As for the analysis of the qualitative data obtained from the interview and the open-ended questions of the questionnaire, the Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA) is used.

### **1. Participants and context of the study**

The investigation is conducted in a realistic setting which is the secondary school Abane Ramdane, Tizi-Ouzou. This school is public, and it comprises three levels: first year students, second year students, and third year ones. The participants involved in this study are (50) third year students selected because they are all in exam classes, and they are supposed to have developed some competences in written composition. Besides, to gather more detailed data, an interview was conducted with six of their teachers: three teachers of English and three teachers of Berber.

### **2. Research Methods**

In order to collect data and answer the questions asked in the general introduction, a mixed-method approach is adopted. The mixed-method approach involves both quantitative and qualitative methods. This method offers us an opportunity to conduct a richer and more detailed research. Creswell (2008) defines the mixed-method research as a method and

methodology to deal with research. It includes, he adds, the gathering, analysis and integration of quantitative and qualitative research in one study. While the quantitative method provides us with numerical data that are converted to percentages, the qualitative method provides us with a description of the phenomena under study.

### **3. Procedures of data collection**

In the present study, an interview is used as a qualitative data collection method, whereas a questionnaire is used as a quantitative data collection method including some qualitative data. Then, the obtained data from the interview are analyzed qualitatively; and the collected data from the questionnaire are interpreted quantitatively using tables, diagrams, and pie charts.

While the questionnaire is handed to secondary school third year students, the interview is conducted with six of their teachers. Indeed, to this type of research, mixed-method approach appears as the most appropriate method to analyze both qualitative and quantitative data effectively.

#### **3.1. The Questionnaire**

A questionnaire is a data collection instrument. It involves a set of items, and it allows gathering a considerable amount of data from given respondents. In this sense, J.P. Key (1997:5) says *“a questionnaire is a means of eliciting the feelings, beliefs, experiences, perceptions, or attitudes of some sample of individuals.”* Moreover, the questionnaire is a research tool from which we gather statistical data in a short period of time and from a large number of people, that is; a questionnaire is distributed for many participants who respond on many questions at the same time, this is why we have adopted this instrument in our study. Besides, the questionnaire is one of the most common tools for gathering data, Wilson and Mc Lean (1994:47) claim *“the questionnaire is a widely used instrument for collecting survey*

*information, providing structured, often numerical data, being able to be administrated without the presence of the researcher.’’*

In the present research, a questionnaire is disseminated to fifty (50) third year students in Abane Ramdane secondary school, Tizi-Ouzou. This questionnaire aims at probing students' behaviours and attitudes towards the teaching of writing. The questionnaire includes 15 questions which are divided into two types: closed ended questions in which predetermined answers are suggested and open-ended questions which give the freedom of answering to the participants. Besides, this questionnaire is divided into two sections: the first is devoted to participants' actions and behaviour concerning the teaching of writing and the second section is concerned with participants' attitudes towards writing and its teaching.

### **3. 2. The Interview**

In addition to the questionnaire, an interview is used as an extensive tool of data collection so as to obtain more specific information. According to P. Key (1997:5), an interview is *“a direct face-to-face attempt to obtain reliable and valid measures in the form of verbal responses from one or more respondents.”* An interview provides the researcher with in-depth answers, that is; the issue is discussed carefully, in details, and in real situation. In fact, this is what has incited us to select the interview as a second data collection tool.

In our research study, an interview is conducted with six (06) teachers of third year classes; among them three (03) teachers of the English language, and three (03) teachers of Berber. While the interview lasts for 15 minutes with five teachers, it does last for about 60 minutes with one teacher who is about to retire and wished to share her experience in teaching English with us. This interview includes ten (10) open-ended questions and it consists of three parts: the first part is related to teachers' experience and the attention they give to writing; the

second part is devoted to the theories and techniques used by the teachers to teach writing, whereas the last part is concerned with teachers' planning to written assignments.

#### **4. Procedures of data analysis**

In order to analyze and interpret the data collected from both the questionnaire and the interview, two data analysis tools are adopted: rule of three and the Critical Discourse Analysis. The quantitative data are interpreted using the rule of three whereas the qualitative data are analyzed using the Qualitative content analysis (QCA).

##### **4.1. Description of the Rule of Three**

The close-ended questions of the questionnaire handed to our participants, that is; the quantitative data is analyzed using the rule of three.

The rule of three is a mathematical rule that allows us to solve problems based on proportions. It helps us finding the fourth unknown number or value among the three known values According to Walfram Mathworld website, the rule of three is an educational tool utilized historically to verbalize the process of solving basic linear equation with four terms where three of the terms are known. In the present study, the unknown values have been calculated using the rule of three; then, they are put on the Excel and converted to either diagrams or pie charts. The rule of three is selected as a data analysis tool in our study because of its practicality and easiness.

##### **4.2. Description of the Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA)**

The qualitative data obtained from the interview and the open-ended questions of the questionnaire are analyzed using the Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA).

According to Mayring, the Qualitative Content Analysis is “an approach of empirical, methodological controlled analysis of texts within their context of communication, following content analytical rules and step by step models, without rash quantification” (2000: 52). Actually, QCA is designed to interpret different texts according to the context where they are produced. This tool is used then to analyze qualitative data such as interviews, discourses, written documents, video tapes etc. Qualitative Content Analysis is adopted in the present study because as stated in the above quotation of Mayring, it is methodologically controlled and it is applied easily following the step by step model. Indeed, the results of our study are divided into categories and each category is analyzed in its context.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has dealt with the research design of the study. First, it has described the context and participants of the study. Second, it has presented the research method which is the mixed-method approach. Third, it has depicted the data collection procedures namely the questionnaire and the interview. Last and not least, this chapter has displayed the data analysis tools which are the rule of three for the analysis of the quantitative data, and the Qualitative Content Analysis for the interpretation of the qualitative data.



## **Chapter 03: Presentation of the findings**

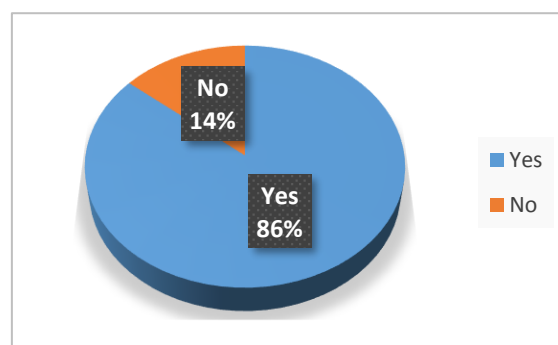
## Introduction

This chapter aims at displaying the results of our investigation. It presents the results gathered from the questionnaire distributed to fifty (50) secondary school third year students, as well as the results of the interview conducted with their teachers. This chapter seeks to report the third year students' behaviours and attitudes towards writing and its teaching, as well as their teachers' perception of the teaching of writing strategies. The results are presented clearly using bar charts or pie charts for the questionnaire, and by using well structured sentences for the interview. Besides, the result chapter involves two major sections. The first section introduces the obtained results from the analysis of the questionnaire intended to identify the actions and attitudes of students towards writing. The second section reports the views of three English language teachers about the teaching of English as a foreign language and the views of three Berber language teachers about teaching Berber as a native language.

### 1. Presentation of the results of the questionnaire.

#### 1.1..Results of section one: Students' behaviour in relation to the learning of the writing skill.

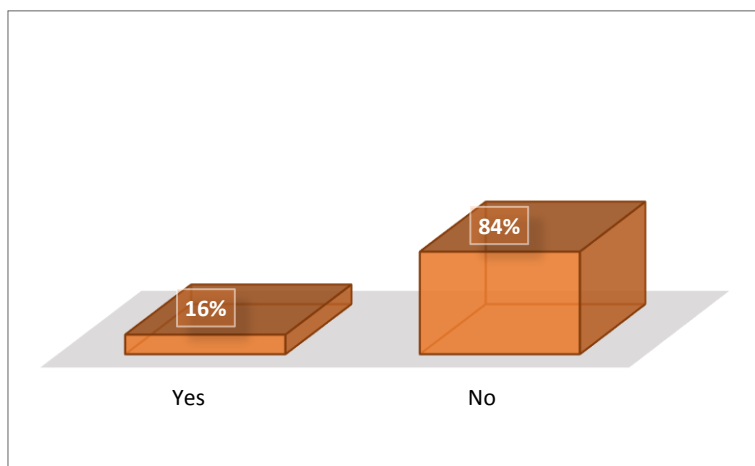
**Question 01:** Do you think that teaching the writing skill is given enough time and attention?



**Pie chart 01:** Participants' view about the attention given to writing.

As displayed in the above pie chart, 86% of the participants think that writing composition is given enough time and attention, and are satisfied with their teachers' lessons.14% of them do think that their teachers do not really focus on the teaching of writing.

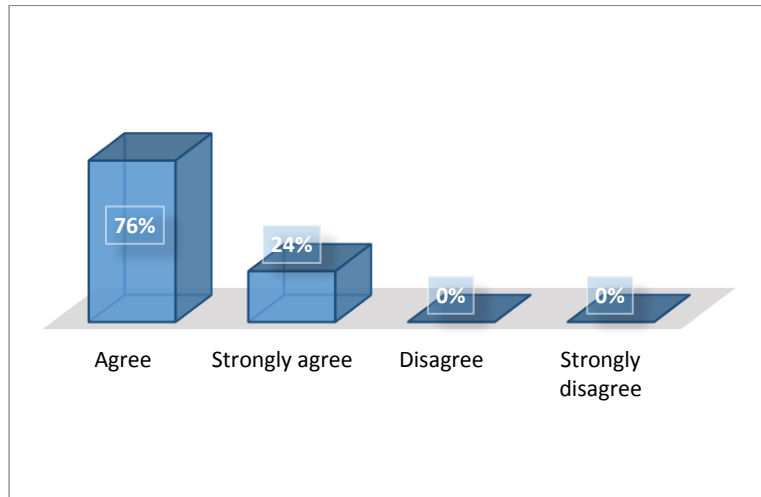
**Question 02:** Do you think that writing in English, which is a foreign language, is given equal interest compared to Berber?



**Diagram 01:** Pupils' views about the importance given to writing in English and Berber.

Diagram01 demonstrates that on the one hand, the vast majority of the participants (84%) think that unequal interest is given to writing in English and writing in Berber, and that they rather prefer to write compositions in Berber since it is easier for them. On the other hand, the minority (16%) affirms that Berber and English are given equal interest.

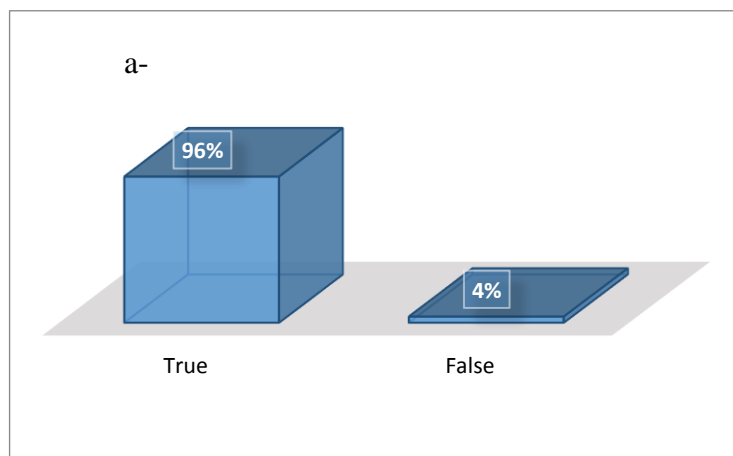
**Question 03:** In addition to correctness (grammar, vocabulary, punctuation, etc.), a deep reflection about content is very important.



**Diagram 02:** The importance of reflection about content.

The diagram above shows that most of the participants (76%) support the idea that reflection about content goes hand in hand with correctness. The rest, that is; 24% do strongly support the same idea, whereas no one denies the importance of reflection about written composition.

**Question 04:** Learning how to combine sentences is helpful to be an affective writer.

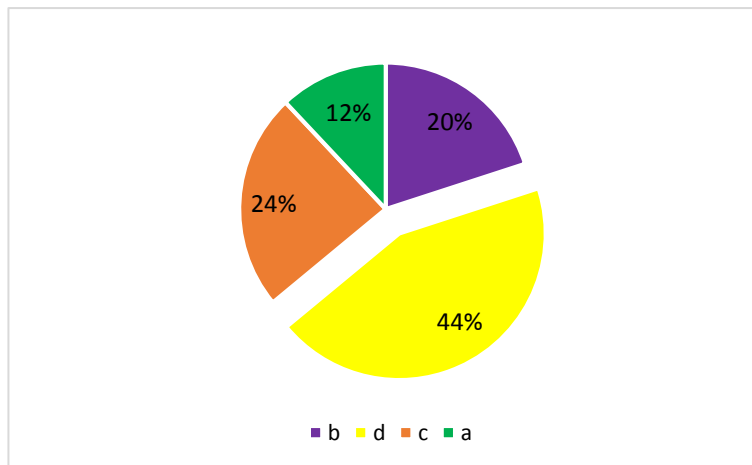


**Diagram 03:** Sentence combination and effective writing.

As highlighted in the above diagram, the vast majority of the participants (96%) see that the use of sentence combination activity enhances their writing skills, whereas only 4% think that it does not.

**Question 05:** Do you read:

- a- English novels
- b- Berber novels
- c- Both
- d- None

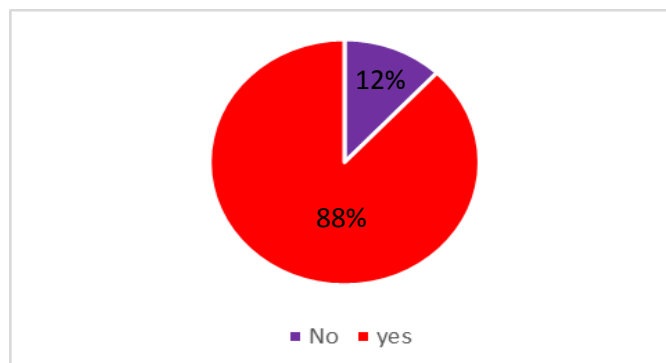


**Pie chart 02:** Books read by students

As underscored in pie chart 03, 44% of the participants, that is the majority, read neither English books nor Berber ones. 24% of them do read both English and Berber books. 20% claim that they read only Berber books. Finally, the minority (12%) say that they read English books.

**Question 06:** Is reading helpful to enhance your writing competence? How?

- a- Yes
- b- No



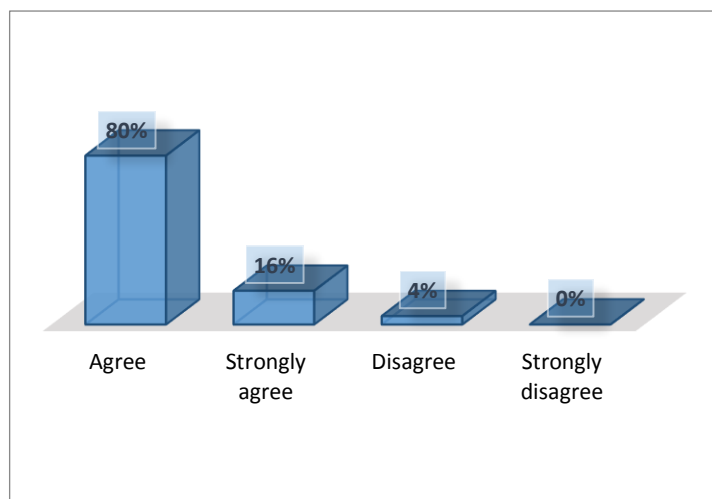
**Pie chart 03:** Enhancing writing through reading.

As displayed in the above pie chart, on the one hand almost all the participants (88%) do think that reading enhances their writing competence. On the other hand; only 12% do view the opposite.

How?

Informants who say that reading fosters their writing skills justify their answer by claiming that from reading, they learn new words, gain new insights and memorize words spelling.

**Question 07:** Free writing develops the writing skills to a great extent.



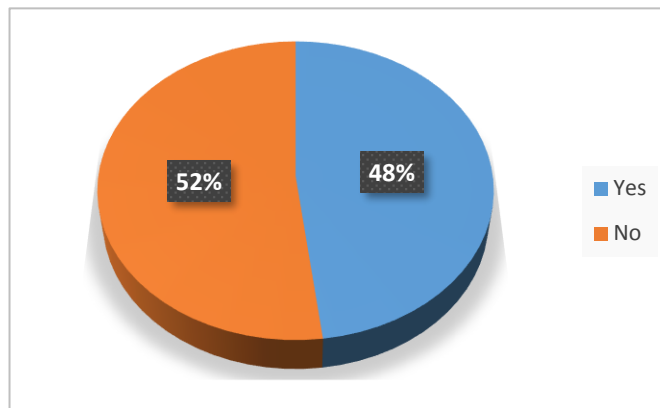
**Diagram04:** Students points of view about free writing as a means to enhance writing.

It is indicated in this diagram that most of our participants (80%) agree on the fact that free writing develops their writing skills to a great extent.

Moreover 16% of them do strongly agree on the same idea. The rest (04%) claim that free writing does not enhance their writing skills; and as it is shown, none of them strongly disagree.

## 1.2. Results of section two: pupils' views towards writing sessions

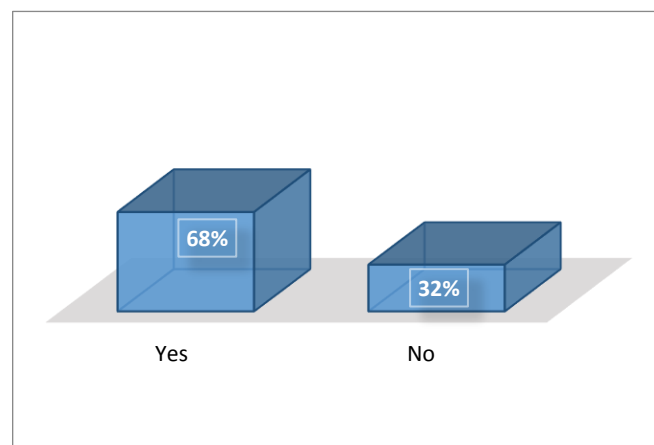
**Question 01: Do you enjoy writing sessions?**



**Pie chart 04:**students' enjoyment to writing sessions.

As noticed in the pie chart above, more than half of the participants (52%) do not enjoy writing sessions. These students justify their answer by arguing that written composition is too difficult, and in this case it becomes boring. 48% of them have no problem with writing and state that they do enjoy writing lessons.

**Question 02:** do you like discussing the topic with other students during the writing lessons, why?



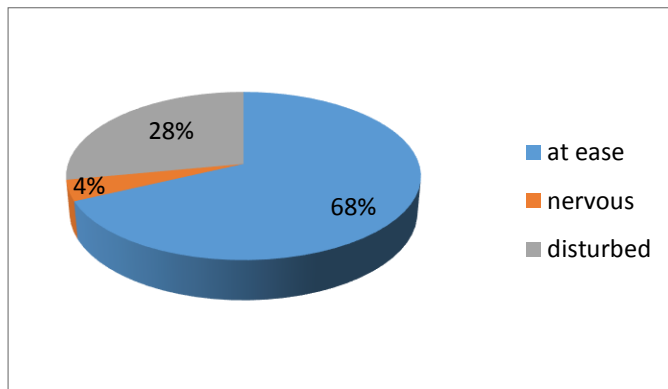
**Diagram 05:** students' attitude towards discussion.

Diagram 05 illustrates that the majority of the participants, that is 68%; like discussing the writing topic with their peers.

The others (32%) claim that they do not support the use of discussion during writing lessons and that they rather prefer working alone.

Why?, Those who support the use of discussion during writing lessons argue that discussing the topic helps them to deliver ideas, whereas those who do not, claim that discussion disturbs them.

**Question 03:** How do you feel when you receive feedback from your peers?

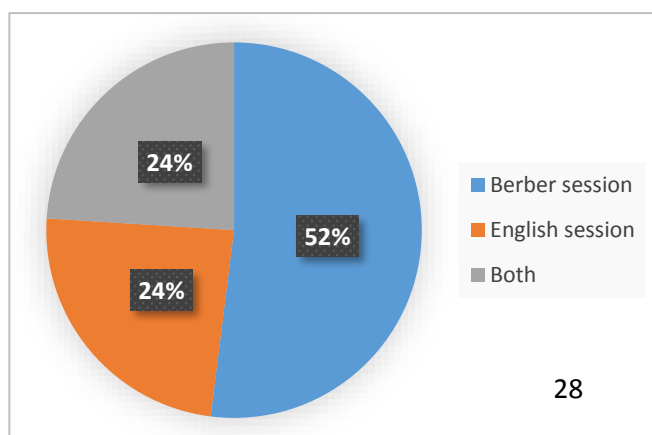


**Pie chart05:** Students' attitude towards feedback.

It is highlighted in Pie chart 06 that the majority of our subjects (68%) feel at ease when they receive feedback from their peers and consider it constructive. 28% of them, however, feel disturbed by their peers' feedback. The rest 04% feel nervous about their classmates' feedback.

**Question 04:** Are you more excited to develop your writing skill during:

- a- Berber sessions
- b- English sessions
- c- Both





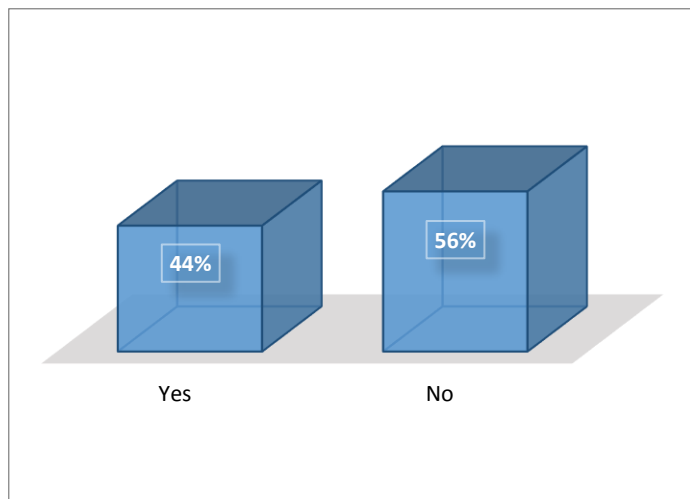
**Pie chart 06:** Students' motivation to develop their writing skill.

As indicated in the pie chart above, most informants (52%) are more excited to study writing in Berber, whereas only 24% are motivated to develop their writing competences in English. The remaining ones (24%) are interested in writing in both English and Berber.

**Question 05:** Are you ready for English and Berber writing composition?

a- Yes

b- No



**Diagram 06:** Students' readiness for Berber and English written compositions.

As shown in diagram 06, on the one hand most students (56%) are not ready for written composition in both Berber and English. On the other hand, 44% of them are ready to some extent, but they claim that they are concerned about the English exam.

**Question 06:** Could you describe the main difficulties that you face when you compose a paragraph?

To start, some of the participants did not answer this question. For those who did, they claim that writing in Berber is much easier than writing in English. They add that the main difficulties they face when they write in English are the lack of vocabulary, spelling mistakes and the right use of tenses.

## **2. The Results of the Interview**

The interview is conducted with six third year level teachers, among them three teachers of Berber and three teachers of English. The interviewees have been asked about their experience, the attention they give to the teaching of writing, the strategies they use to develop their pupils' writing skill and the advice they give their pupils to write more effectively. They have been asked as well about the use of reflection and discussion which are two main principles in Hillocks' theory which is the framework of the present study.

In response to the question about the time and attention the respondents give to writing, they all state that they give enough time to the teaching of this very important skill. As far as the strategies of teaching writing are concerned, the teachers of Berber state that they use group work, dictation, free writing and reading. Regarding the teachers of English, they also use group work, free writing, and reading and implement summarizing and translation as well. When it comes to the pieces of advice, nearly all the informants advise their students to read and to apply free writing. Last and not least all the interviewees believe that thinking is strongly connected with writing and add that authentic discussion does strongly enhance students' performance during writing lessons.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has reported the results of the questionnaire and the interview. The questionnaire has indicated that students' behaviours and attitudes towards writing differ from one student to another; some act positively towards this skill, whereas others do not. The

interview has reported that all the interviewees (teachers) are aware of the importance of writing and that they use various strategies to help their students to be effective writers. A detailed discussion of these results is provided in the next chapter.

## **Discussion of the Findings**

## **Introduction**

This chapter aims at discussing the results obtained from the questionnaire handed to secondary school third year students and from the interview conducted with their teachers. For the discussing and interpreting of the results, the Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA) is used. The chapter involves five sections. The first explains the adopted approach to the teaching of writing in both English and Berber. The second category concerns the techniques used by both teachers of English and Berber to enhance their students' writing skill. The next section is devoted to the use of discussion during writing lessons. The fourth section deals with the importance of reflection about the written composition content. The last section highlights how assignments are used inside and outside the classroom. In addition to these sections, an analysis of students' problems in writing is given highlighting some effective strategies that enhance their writing skill. It is important to mention that the results of this discussion are used to answer the questions asked in the general introduction. One other point is that the discussion is framed by Hillocks' theory about teaching writing as a reflective practice.

### **1. Teaching Writing**

#### **A. The Adopted Approach to the Teaching of Writing**

It is not always an easy task for the teacher to select the appropriate method that would help him teach writing successfully. When the participants have been asked about the Process approach to teaching writing, the teachers of English answered that they do implement this approach in their lessons to teach writing. One of them explained that besides the teaching of linguistic knowledge, students need to learn how to proceed in their writing. This is supported by Hillocks who, through his exhaustive study about the teaching of writing in 1987, concludes that traditional methods such as the product approach do not contribute to an effective teaching of writing. He adds that the way content is produced is not dependent upon

correct grammar, but is more an intuitive process. Considering the Berber language teachers, they all declared that they had not heard about the process approach, but when an explanation was given to them, they reacted and stated that they do use this approach and it is an effective one to render students good writers. All in all, focusing on correctness does not improve grammatical accuracy or writing fluency and paying attention to what the students say is the way to improve writing (White and Arnt, 1991). Hence, teachers of writing should not dispel the process oriented approach from their writing lessons, and they have to take its stages seriously.

### **B. The Techniques Used by the Teachers of English and Berber to Enhance their Students' Writing Competence**

The results show that the participants teach their students various writing techniques. To start, five (05) teachers prefer using one strategy whereas only one teacher of them, the teacher of English who has an experience of twenty one years, uses various techniques. Concerning the teachers of English, they do rely greatly on the use of group work activity. These teachers deem group work as an important activity because they think that it helps to promote students' collaboration and production. In this sense, Sir Ken Robinson (2012) states that a great amount of learning occurs in groups and collaboration arouse growth. Indeed when they are in groups, students learn to work with one another, they try to learn from one another and they may even understand from their comrades more than from their teachers. Besides, this collaboration gives the opportunity to gain confidence when they assert themselves and affirm their ideas, in this way they learn to be better writers and mature persons. In addition to group work, the English language teachers use paraphrasing, translation, and discussion. Considering the teachers of Berber, they use strategies such as reading, free writing, and dictation. One of the teachers claims that learning Berber does not need much practice or effort as foreign languages since it is the mother tongue of Berber

students who would not have problems in grammar or pronunciation. Hence, one can notice that different strategies are used to teach writing in these two different types of languages.

### **C. The Use of Discussion During Writing Sessions**

Discussion is among the widely used strategies in teaching the writing skill, and it is a primordial notion in Hillocks' theory. Discussion can be an excellent strategy to foster students' motivation and enhance their intellectual agility; it allows them as well to practise a number of skills among which writing is included (Brookfield and Preskill, 1999). As a matter of fact, this strategy is very useful to stimulate students to work hard and compete with one another so that to be more creative and succeed to produce worthy pieces of writing adopting different positions. Besides, discussion prompts the speaking skill and the listening one while students speak with one another and listen to one another.

In the present study the six teachers are asked about the use of this technique. All the participants confirm that they do use discussion. For instance, one of the English teachers argues that using discussion during writing lessons is very beneficial and constructive to her students because it gives them the opportunity to share ideas, learn from one another, and correct one another. Another participant agrees with this teacher of English stating that discussion helps her students to deliver ideas especially when they deal with the argumentative type of essay where they debate the topic and compete with one another to get the best mark about written composition. This is also the reason why, Hillocks (1995) supports the use of authentic discussion which should be according to him 'dialogic'. In this way, students would discuss the problem increasing the sense of inquiry and competition. He adds that the question of the discussion must be challenging enough to make students think deeply about it and generate more and more ideas and different views.

As far as the students are concerned, the great majority (68%) declared that discussion is very helpful for them to accomplish the written assignments given by their teachers.

#### **D. The Importance of Reflection in Writing**

Reflection is another golden notion in Hillocks' theory. This scholar asserts that writing is not the combination of vocabulary and grammatical rules, but it is meaning itself. Thomas (1993: 13) adds that the idea that writing means grammar must be dispersed and the importance of 'ideas' and what students say must be given interest. In fact, teachers have to build in their students' minds the notion that thought is the soul of the written composition and that it is what makes one written composition different from one hundred others. Concerning the results of the present study, all of the interviewed teachers have given a positive answer regarding the use of reflection in written composition. One of the teachers of English declares that expressing feelings and thoughts when writing is as important as correctness and mechanics and that it is reflection that gives to the piece of writing its originality. Another teacher (Berber teacher) agrees with him affirming that grammar and vocabulary go hand in hand with content. Hillocks (1995: 75) argues:

Real teaching is about helping students learn to enjoy the process of thinking through complex problems because that gives them the power and the confidence to undertake new problems in new situations without the structure of the classroom environments.

Indeed, critical thinking is needed in every teaching step because without it teaching would be a blind reproduction of the same errors. In other words; it is useless if teachers teach their students writing only for the sake to make them produce something in relation to the model studied. This is because in addition to the development of their writing skill, students need to learn from their errors, and this can be achieved only if writing is taught in relation to thinking.



## **E. Writing Assignments Inside and Outside the Classroom**

The concept of assignment is of a great importance in the teaching of writing; it involves the different tasks and directions given by teachers to involve their students in writing activities. To start, the first section of the participants, that is; Berber language teachers claim that the most complex activities that need guidance, collaboration, and debate are tackled inside the classroom whereas free writing and less complex tasks are tackled outside the classroom. In fact, the role of the teacher should be to guide his students and make them discover new and complex notions in a simple way. Besides, to write well, students depend highly on their teachers' directions, so the assignment should be as clear as possible. Regarding English language teachers, they have provided a similar answer to that of the teachers of Berber in that more complex tasks should be done inside the classroom for the sake of observing and helping students. One of these teachers of English states *"I do much practice with my students in the classroom where I can observe them one by one, and give them help and feedback. This is really effective to foster their writing abilities."*

## **2. Students' Difficulties to Learning Writing**

After describing these six sections in relation to the teaching of writing in both English and Berber in the secondary school, it is worth analyzing students' motivation towards writing sessions. To start, it is said by many educators that most students are weak in writing and that these students feel very nervous each time they are confronted to writing assignments (Neil, 1982). According to the findings of the present investigation, most secondary third year pupils are very excited to develop their writing skill in English and in Berber especially. However, they do not enjoy writing sessions, and they find that learning the writing skill is difficult especially in English (the foreign language). This can be justified by the fact that they do not devote enough time to prepare themselves for English sessions, or because as shown in the

results, 12% only of them read books in English. These participants revealed in their answers that there are many difficulties that hinder them to master the English language, among these hindrances the lack of vocabulary, conjugation, and spelling mistakes. It is obvious that foreign language learners face some difficulties when acquiring a new language, but teachers have to handle the situation and cope with their pupils' learning problems.

### **3. Strategies Enhancing Students' Writing Competence**

It is deduced from the participants' answers (third year students) that there are a set of strategies that students think helpful to enhance their writing skill. The first strategy is reading. It is hardly surprising that reading is a helpful activity to write better. Indeed students having the tendency to read to ensure better writing. This is because reading provides them with a new vocabulary, helps them to learn words spelling, offers them new perspectives of viewing the world, and arouse in their minds curiosity and inquiry. In this regard, Pearson (2002) claims that reading and writing are tightly connected, and that each single piece of writing builds on a previous reading. This is actually why most teachers of English and Berber (the participants) advise their students to apply this useful strategy.

The next strategy that students claimed to be helpful to foster their writing abilities is free writing. This strategy is also advised by their teachers. Free writing is to bear in students' minds that the emotional and personal aspects of their lives are allowed to be included in their pieces of writing without giving importance to mechanics. Connors (Cited in Fred Kemp 1994:46) advocates *"If students avoid personal or emotional topics, a source of motivation and interest is lost"*. In actual fact, emotions and attitudes is what makes a written composition different from another because every single student has his own experience. Besides, Lewis (2012) adds that free writing is a very useful means to develop one's thinking abilities, generate new ideas, and provides a self pride. This is actually true because in free writing, the student feels to be in an author' position who is an important person with bright

ideas and autonomous style, and this is indeed what Hillocks (1995) referred to in his theory about teaching writing as a reflective practice. It is worth mentioning that most of the participants, 80% of third year students, support the use of free writing and are aware of its usefulness.

The third strategy to be discussed is 'group work'. It is more comfortable for students when they tackle the writing assignment in groups. First, students are given the opportunity to practice the target language freely and effectively. Next, they learn to work collaboratively, that is; to exchange ideas, listen to each other, and correct each other. Johnson and Johnson (1998) affirm that writing in a group reduces nervousness and enhances self-confidence. This is actually true because the student does not always master the writing topic, so it would be a great opportunity for him to deal with it in a group, try to understand it from his classmates, and then give his own ideas for a better writing. However, group work is not always successful because in some cases some lazy pupils rely on their comrades and do not produce anything. In this case, group work would be a failure unless the teacher intervenes to establish some balance in the group. As far as the teachers of English are concerned, they do strongly support the use of group work during writing sessions. One of them agrees with Johnson and Johnson (1998 ) claiming, *"I do encourage group work to teach writing because it does enhance to a great extent my students' writing skill"*. Like the teachers of English, Berber language ones use group work to teach writing, and they claim that writing in groups is very useful and productive.

The last suggested strategy is called 'peers' feedback '.This strategy is a means whereby students evaluate the work of their mates giving them correction (Dochy, Segers, & Sluijsmans1999; Sluijsmans et al. 2002). Peers' correction demands high levels of thinking. According to Askew and Lodge (2000), the use of peer-feedback involves both teachers and students in 'collaborative and reflective dialog'. Indeed, when there is peer feedback, all

students are involved to assess each other, however; even the teacher is involved because he is there to guide his students and show them how to proceed in this activity to make it effective and beneficial to his students. As far as the participants of the present investigation are concerned, that is third year students, they almost claim that peer feedback does not arouse their anxiety, but it rather makes them feel at ease. To conclude with these teaching writing strategies, each single technique can be very helpful to enhance students' writing skill, but it is up to the teacher to use it in the way to make it beneficial.

#### **4. Drawing Conclusions**

One of the main objectives of the discussion is to answer the research questions. As a reminder, the research questions of the present work were to discover the teaching writing techniques used by both English and Berber language teachers, check if they use the same techniques, and to see whether third year pupils give equal interest to learning writing strategies in English and Berber. To start, it is noticed that teachers of English as a foreign language use various techniques to teach their students writing; they use besides paragraph completion, summarizing and translation much group work and free writing. Teachers of English think that these techniques are the most appropriate to teach writing in a foreign language. Indeed as it was proved in the previous part, group work and free writing are very effective techniques to teach students writing especially in a foreign language. This is because group work offers the opportunity of practice and deep reflection to students and this is in fact what is needed to promote the acquisition of a foreign language; because as Hillocks (1985) claims, reflection is a necessity in every teaching and learning step. Similarly, free writing allows students to take risks in their writing, thus they permit themselves to think freely and use language as they wish.

When it comes to Berber language teachers, it is noticed that in addition to dictation and reading during writing sessions they do also use group work. In fact, reading is useful to

memorize language spelling and learn new vocabulary because even if Berber is the native language of Berber pupils and they do speak it well, this does not mean that they master its graphic system and the whole diction. These teachers also use dictation which does help students to avoid spelling mistakes. Therefore, it is deduced from the analysis of the participants' writing strategies that there are some common techniques used by both teachers of English and Berber (group work and reading), but there are also some strategies used only by the teachers of English to teach writing in English as a foreign language (paragraph completion, summarizing, and translation).

In point of fact, teaching writing in English as a foreign language requires different and more consistent strategies because as stated in the section 'learners' difficulties', third year pupils suffer from many deficiencies in EFL such as lack of vocabulary, spelling mistakes etc. Besides, as Silva (1993) claims, using the same strategies to teach L1 and L2 does not bear fruits of success. This is true because foreign language learners need to enrich their vocabulary, they need to master the spelling system, and they should learn about L2 culture which is completely strange for them, and this requires appropriate and authentic strategies as for example; watching videos in the foreign language, reading in the target language, communicating with native speakers etc.

The writing skill is developed in a foreign language for the sake of accomplishing a set of purposes. These purposes are summarizing, narrating, reporting, and note taking, and all these tasks should be fulfilled in a way to respect cohesion and organization. (Wingard, 1991: 143). Wingard affirms that a foreign language, English, is learned by non native speakers to fulfill some tasks in the same language, especially that the movement of globalization requires the mastery of the English language. Hence, teachers of English have to deal with the writing strategies very carefully and they have to draw on scholars' theories. In this regard, Ur (2002) points out that the writing process must be the 'starting point' to enhance students' writing

skill, and he adds that students need to go through many writing attempts and experiences to master writing skills. In fact, the process approach to teaching writing facilitates greatly the mastery of writing competences, and as it is confirmed, all the participants of the present study (the teachers of English and even those of Berber) do apply the process approach and it is very efficient to help their students to write better, because as one teacher of Berber states *“the use of the stages of the process approach is very helpful to write effectively”*. Hence, one can deduce that the process approach is not only devoted to teach writing in foreign languages but also native ones.

Continuing with the teaching of the writing skill in English as a foreign language, it would be exciting for learners if their teachers try new teaching strategies. In this sense, Graham and Perin (2007) suggest a different technique to teach writing to middle and high school learners. This technique is called ‘word processing’; it consists of using word processors to support the teaching of writing assignments inside the classroom. This is actually very useful because technology attains high levels of evolution and innovation, so why not to take profit. Besides, adolescents enjoy using these new technologies; therefore it would be very useful if teachers of secondary schools introduce microcomputers into the writing curriculum and train their students to use this computer program during the writing sessions. Moreover, new environments of teaching writing would be as a hook to catch students’ attention and make them enjoy writing session that they (the participants) described as boring. Sommers and Collins, in their review about the use of word processing during writing sessions in 1984, found that this practice gives absolutely good results especially that it fits the process approach in the sense that it includes editing, revising etc, and word processing facilitates greatly the task.

The last point to discuss is pupils’ interest towards enhancing their writing skill in both Berber and English. The participants

To sum up, the three research questions of the present study are answered all along this chapter. The first question was about the techniques used by both teachers of English and Berber to teach their students writing and it has been found that the teachers do use various techniques such as group work, free writing, reading, translation etc. The second question was to check whether the teachers of these two languages use the same techniques or not, and it has been proved that the teachers share the use of some techniques; this includes group work, free writing and reading. The third question was about third year pupils' perception to writing, and their view towards the teaching of this skill is reported positive even though they suffer from some difficulties concerning EFL.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter has discussed the results gathered from the questionnaire handed to students and the interview disseminated to their teachers. It has dealt with some significant concepts in relation to the teaching of writing drawing basically on Hillocks' theory. This chapter has also answered the three research questions asked in the general introduction of the present research.

## **General Conclusion**



## **Conclusion**

The present investigation has explored the applied techniques to the teaching of writing in two types of languages having two different statuses in Algeria. While Berber is an official language, English is a foreign one. The study has taken place in Abane Ramdane secondary school, including third year students and six of their teachers as participants. The research has aimed at discovering whether the teachers of Berber and English use the same techniques to teach writing, and at checking if the applied techniques are efficient and beneficial to foster learners' writing skill.

The study is divided into four chapters: The first chapter was theoretical; it reviews previous scholarly works in relation to the teaching of writing, the second chapter was devoted to the research design, the third one displayed the results obtained from the questionnaire and interview, and the last chapter sought to discuss and analyze the gathered results.

In order to answer the research questions and confirming or refuting the hypotheses suggested in the general introduction, a mixed method approach is adopted. That is, qualitative and quantitative methods were combined to analyze the data collected from the questionnaire disseminated to fifty (50) third year students and the interview conducted with six of their teachers. Besides, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences was used to analyze the quantitative data, whereas the Critical Discourse Analysis was used to analyze the qualitative data.

The discussion of the results has provided us with answers to the advanced questions in the general introduction. To start, it was revealed that Berber and English language teachers use diverse strategies to teach the writing skill, among these strategies group work, dictation, free writing, summarizing, reading etc. Next, it was reported that the teachers do almost use the

same techniques to teach their pupils writing; for instance; they all use group work and advise their pupils to read and write to foster their writing abilities.

Lastly, it has been shown that secondary school third year learners have a positive view towards the writing strategies they are taught during writing lessons.

As far as the limitations of the present work are concerned, adequate references about the teaching of writing in Berber were not available. Therefore, it is recommended for researchers in the field of languages to deal with different aspects of the Berber language so that to enrich the scholarship and the bibliography of this language and give it the prestige it deserves as an official language in the Algerian country.

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## **Appendices**

## 1) The questionnaire handed to students

This questionnaire is part of research that aims at investigating the teaching of the writing skill in two different languages: English and Berber, in an Algerian context. It is destined for secondary school third year students. In order to collect the necessary data, your cooperation would be of a great help. So, you are kindly invited to answer the following questions, and be sure that it is absolutely anonymous.

*THANK YOU FOR YOUR COLLABORATION.*

### II. Students' behaviour:

1. Do you think that teaching the writing skill is given enough time and attention?

Yes

No

2. Do you think that writing in English, which is a foreign language, is given equal interest compared to Berber?

Yes

No

3. In addition to correctness (grammar, vocabulary, punctuation etc.), a deep reflection about content is very important.

Agree

strongly agree

disagree

strongly disagree

4. Learning how to combine sentences is helpful to be an effective writer.

True

false

5. Do you read:

English novels    Berber novels    both    none

6. Is reading helpful to enhance your writing competence, how?

7. Free writing develops the writing skill to a great extent.

Agree                      strongly agree                      disagree                      strongly disagree

### III. Students' attitudes towards writing sessions:

1. Do you enjoy writing sessions?

Yes No

2. Do you like discussing the topic with other students during the writing lessons, why?

3 How do you feel when you receive feedback from your peers?

At ease                      nervous                      disturbed

4. Are you more excited to develop your writing skill during:

Berber sessions	English sessions	both
1	1	1
2	2	2
3	3	3
4	4	4
5	5	5
6	6	6
7	7	7
8	8	8
9	9	9
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92	92	92
93	93	93
94	94	94
95	95	95
96	96	96
97	97	97
98	98	98
99	99	99
100	100	100

5. Are you ready for the English and Berber written composition?

Yes No

6. Could you describe the main difficulties that you face when you compose a paragraph?



## **2) The interview conducted with the teachers**

This interview is part of a research that aims at investigating the teaching of writing in both English, as a foreign language, and the teaching of Berber as a native one; and this is in the Algerian context. Your answers would be of a great significance for the completion of this work. So, you are kindly requested to answer the following questions.

### **The questions of the interview:**

1. How long have you been teaching English/Berber (for the teachers of Berber)?
2. How many sessions do you devote to written composition?
3. According to you, to what extent is teaching writing important? Why?
4. What strategies do you use to foster your students' writing skill?
5. Do you ask your students to work in groups to provide pieces of writing?
6. Do you implement, in your lessons, the process approach to writing?
7. Do you encourage the use of discussion during your lessons? If yes, how is this beneficial for your students?
8. Do you think that, in addition to the general knowledge about writing, thinking is important to render students effective writers?
9. How do you plan for the assignments to teach writing inside the classroom and outside?
10. What pieces of advice do you give to your students so that they enhance their writing skills in English as a foreign language/ Berber (for the teachers of Berber)?

## **II .2.The answers of the English language teachers**

### **II .2.1.The answers of the first English language teacher**

1. The interviewee answers that she has been teaching English for fifteen (15) years.
2. In response to this question, the participant states that she devotes two (02) sessions per week to teach the written composition.
3. When it comes to the importance of writing, the informant claims that writing is very important because first, it is a means of communication; then, it is thanks to writing that teachers check their students' understanding of the linguistic knowledge.
4. The interviewee says that she usually refers to her students' everyday life during the writing sessions.
5. The respondent confirms that she encourages the use of group work, and that it gives students the opportunity to learn collaboration, to exchange ideas, and therefore write better.
6. During her lessons, the participant affirms that she implements the process approach to writing, and she argues that in addition to the teaching of the linguistic knowledge; students need to learn how to proceed in their writing.
7. The informant declares that she does use discussion during her lessons, and she claims that it is very beneficial to her students since it allows them to share ideas, learn from one another, and correct one another.
8. In response to this question, the interviewee confirms that thinking about content is very important and that content is the soul of the written composition.
9. As regards planning written assignments, the participant states that inside the classroom the assignments are more complex since the teacher is there to help students, whereas they are less complex outside.

10. The teacher advises her students to write regularly to apply the linguistic knowledge they have learned, to stop thinking in the native language when they write, and to read.

## **II .2.2.The answers of the second English language teacher**

1. The second interviewee announces that she has been teaching English for thirteen (13) years.
2. The participant states that she teaches her students writing once a week, and she justifies her answer with the fact that there is not enough time to give the written composition more attention.
3. The second informant claims that the teaching of writing is very important because firstly, the Baccalaureate English exam includes a written composition on six (06) points; second, writing allows the teacher as well as students to check their knowledge about language; third, writing gives the students an opportunity to express themselves in English.
4. The respondent declares that the main strategy she uses to foster her students writing competences is to divide her students into groups, make them do everything in the classroom (brainstorming, editing, selecting etc.), and make them collaborate.
5. This is indeed what the interviewee has discussed in her previous answer; she affirms that group work is very effective to develop students' writing competences.
6. Our informant declares that she does implement the process approaches to writing in her lessons, and she argues that writing is a process and students should write following its stages.
7. In response to this question, the subject states that she does strongly support the use of discussion during writing lessons because it does not only enhance the writing skill but also the speaking one.

8. It is said by our interviewee that thinking is crucial in written composition and that it goes hand in hand with form.
9. The second informant reveals that she gives more written assignments in the classroom rather than outside of it, because she thinks that she should observe her students while writing.
10. The English language teacher advises her third year students to read as much as possible and to watch English movies as well to learn new words, and then develop their writing skills.

### **II .2.3.The answers of the third English language teacher**

1. The third interviewee informs us that she has twenty one years (21) in the field of English teaching.
2. When it comes to the time devoted to the teaching of writing, the participant announces that she asks her students to write at least one meaningful sentence per session.
3. The participant confirms that the teaching of writing should be given a great attention since writing is very important; first, because it is a primordial skill to acquire a foreign language, then it takes part from the social and professional life of students.
4. Regarding the strategies used by the respondent to foster her students' writing skills, she reveals that she uses various techniques among them: peer or group work, summarizing, paragraph completion, and translation.
5. To answer this question, the interviewee claims that she does set her students to work in groups, and that it is very beneficial to her students
6. The interviewee answers this question by confirming her use to the process approach, and she adds that the writing stages are very helpful to produce good pieces of writing.

7. The respondent uses discussion in her lessons, besides; she reports that it is beneficial to her students in the sense that it allows them to learn from one another
8. The third respondent admits that the mastery of linguistic knowledge is not enough to write effectively, and the students have to go in depth to express their thoughts and feelings.
9. Considering the planning of the written assignments, the participant states that inside the classroom she opts for eliciting ideas from students and asks them to continue writing home to check their writing later on.
10. In order to enhance their writing skill, this teacher advises her students to read books and listen to news to learn vocabulary.

## **II .3.The answers of the Berber language teachers**

### **II .3.1.The answers of the first Berber language teacher**

1. The first Berber teacher informs us that she has been teaching Berber for six (06) years.
2. Our interviewee reveals that she devotes two sessions per week for the written expression.
3. The participant claims that teaching writing is very important and that it is an essential skill to master any language.
4. The informant answers that she uses dictation and encourages reading.
5. This participant responds that she does divide her students in groups and makes them collaborate to produce pieces of writing.
6. To answer this question, the respondent declares that she does implement the process approach to teaching writing in her lessons. She claims that to teach her students writing, she draws upon the principles of this approach.

7. The interviewee announces that she does encourage discussion during her writing lessons, and she argues that it helps her students to deliver ideas especially when they deal with the argumentative essay.
8. The informant does strongly agree on the fact that thinking accompanies the linguistic knowledge (form) to deliver a good piece of writing.
9. The interviewee affirms that she prepares the most complex assignments, as for instance about the studied essays, in the classroom; whereas she gives only further practice to her students outside.
10. The interviewee answers that the best thing to do for those who want to enhance their writing skills is to read as much as possible.

### **II .3.2.The answers of the second Berber language teacher**

1. The second Berber language teacher we have interviewed announces that she has one (01) year of experience in teaching Berber.
2. The interviewee declares that she dedicates two (02) sessions per week to the teaching of writing.
3. The participant claims that teaching writing is a necessity because writing is included in every step of the students' learning processes.
4. This respondent states that she uses much free writing applying the different studied genres.
5. The respondent confirms that group work is very useful, and that she does adopt it during her writing sessions.
6. In her answer, the interviewee reveals that she does implement the stages of the process approach in her lessons.

7. The interviewee supports the use of discussion during writing lessons. She claims that it motivates students to write more and better.
8. In response to this question, the subject agrees that both the linguistic knowledge and a thoughtful content are necessary to write effectively.
9. The respondent answers that, inside the classroom, she provides her students with a maximum of guidance; whereas outside of it, she gives her students the freedom to write alone.
10. This Berber language teacher advises her students to read books and write outside the classroom to be effective writers.

### **II .2.3.The answers of the third Berber language teacher**

1. The third Berber language teacher we have interviewed declares that she has six (06) years of experience in the teaching of Berber.
2. Our respondent reveals that she dedicates three (03) sessions per month to the teaching of writing.
3. Our subject affirms that teaching writing is very important because writing is used in every field of life.
4. When it comes to the strategies that our informant employs to develop her students' writing skill, she says that she encourages reading during her lessons.
5. The answer of the respondents shows that she does foster the group work during her writing lessons.
6. The interviewee claims that the use of the stages of the process approach is very helpful to write effectively.

7. The interviewee praises the use of discussion during writing lessons. She adds that she usually uses it when she deals with the argumentative essay and it gives very good results.
8. The participant admits that the linguistic knowledge is essential, but a thoughtful content is more important.
9. The informant reveals that she prefers, in the classroom, to plan assignments that need discussion and collaboration so that to make her students work in groups; whereas outside of it, she opts for simpler tasks.
10. As this last question is concerned, our interviewee says that she usually advises her students to read as much as they can.