

**THE EFFECT OF COOPERATIVE LEARNING ON THE  
WRITING SKILL OF LOW ENGLISH PROFICIENCY IN  
LOWER SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS**

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## ABSTRACT

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The main aim of this research paper is to identify the effective learning strategy to teach writing skills in order to help the low English proficiency students in lower secondary schools in the Kuching District. This study focused on the use of a selected cooperative learning strategy specified specially Student Achievement Division (STAD) an instructional strategy designed and developed by Robert Slavin at the Johns Hopkin University. This teaching strategy is evaluated on its effectiveness based on the pretest-posttest design. There were 24 form one students from SMK St. Mary, Kuching and SMK St Thomas, Kuching who took part as a sample in this study. The result of T-test is used to compare the low English proficiency students' achievements in their writing ability. Qualitative data are also being used to identify the learning attitudes of the students towards the two teaching approaches; "Traditional Teaching" for the control group and the "Cooperative Learning Strategy (STAD)" as experimental group which were employed in this study. The types of instructions were the independent variable while students' writing achievement of low English proficient form one students were the dependent variable.

The study produced evidence that writing skills of the low English proficient students who learnt through Cooperative Learning (STAD) were significantly better compared to the low English proficient students who learnt through traditional method of instructions. The results are discussed in light of theories of Cooperative learning and active student involvement in the learning process. This study also discussed pedagogical implications and suggested recommendations for further research.

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

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### 1.1 Introduction

The teaching of English has become more challenging and Education Ministry's curriculum Development made a revision in the Curriculum to enable teachers to understand more about the curriculum specification and the teaching strategies used.

In a multi-ethnic and multicultural country like Malaysia, national unity is an overriding goal in the formulation of socio economic policies. The nations' ideology proclaimed in 1969 forms the basis for the consolidation of national unity. Since the proclamation, it has provided the direction for all political economic, social and cultural policies and constitutes an important milestone in the development of education in Malaysia. Development in education was further grounded through the National Philosophy of Education (NPE) established in 1988.

The essence of the (NPE) is to develop the potential of individuals in a holistic and integrated manner, so as to produce citizens who are intellectually, spiritually, emotionally and physically balanced and harmonious based on a firm belief in and devoted to God. The NPE is regarded as a statement of vision for the Ministry of Education of hard forms as basis in the development of education vis-à-vis the nation's goal to become an industrialized country by the year 2020..

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

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The review of related literature in this study is discussed under four subtopics:

- Theoretical perspectives on cooperative learning.
- Research on traditional classroom and cooperative learning.
- Classroom instructions in Malaysia.
- Research on writing using cooperative learning and related issues.

#### **2.1 Theoretical Perspectives on Cooperative Learning.**

The four theoretical perspectives discussed in this section will relate cooperative learning to achievement. They are motivational perspectives, social cohesion perspectives, cognitive perspectives, and developmental perspectives.

Motivational perspectives on cooperative learning focus primarily on the reward or goal structures under which students operate (Slavin, 1977, 1995). According to motivationalists such as Johnson and Johnson (1992) and Slavin (1995), cooperative incentive structures create a learning environment where the attainment of group member's goals can be assured only by the group success. Thus, the theoretical rationale for these group rewards is that students value the success of the group, they will help one another to achieve and encourage group mates to exert maximum effort (Slavin, 1996).