Mastering of English Writing Skill by Students of Upper Secondary Schools in Kosovo

Sadete Tërnava-Osmani[1], MA. Aurorë Osmani[2]

Abstract: Nowadays, mastering of English language skills presents an obligation for achieving a professional goal in a respective area of education and communication in general. Language skills go hand in glove in order for a person to be competent in applied linguistics. The English writing skill particularly amongst students of secondary schools level in Kosovo has not been addressed separately. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to identify and analyse the pedagogical implications of the English writing skill in the upper secondary education level in Kosovo. This research which examined the level of the English writing skill by students of the upper secondary schools in Kosovo, showed that: a) students are aware on the importance of mastering English language skill as a prerequisite of further academic development and b) they have good understanding on importance of inclusion of the writing skill in an integrated way.

Keywords: language; skills; communication; education; linguistics; writing; teaching; methods

1. Introduction

Language skills teaching and learning belong to applied linguistics and they present a set of skills which are taught depending on the education system. Since, the scope of study covering the English writing skill of as a foreign language In Kosovo has not been studied in depth in the past this research identifies and analyses pedagogical implications on the level of mastering the English writing skill by students of upper secondary schools in the country.

In Kosovo strong changes in the process of learning English skills have taken place, firstly because of the significance of English as a global language with a lingua-

[1] Professor, PhD, Department of Journalism, Faculty of Philology, University of Prishtina, Albania, Address: Hasan Prishtina, Albania, E-mail: sadete.ternava@uni-pr.edu.
[2] MA, Department of Journalism, Faculty of Philology, University of Prishtina, Albania, Address: Hasan Prishtina, Albania, Corresponding author: auroreosmani@gmail.com.

franca status, and secondly because Kosovo is showing a big interest in including English at all levels of education. Learning and teaching foreign languages in Kosovo is not anymore only formal. This means that students who learn English should be trained to use it for communication purposes, and be able to express themselves freely in both skills, writing and speaking.

One of the priorities of Kosovo educational system strategy is expansion of English by that, that 50 per cent of programmes would offer at least one optional course in English language. In this vein, learning and teaching English has become an imperative of the overall Kosovo education development, as speaking English fluently is a *sine-qua-non* for further individual and group achievements.

It must be admitted that language skills could not provide learners with the best result if not taught in an integrative way, as they link to each other not only logically but pedagogically. However, it is to be noted that in Kosovo, teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) has for a long time been limited to the teaching of correct grammar rules. In this context, all four basic language skills (listening, speaking, writing and reading) were not included with an integrative approach, but rather as separated rules learned by heart embracing as such the grammar-translation theory (Nunan, 2015), which did not serve the communicative approach on learning aspects of applied linguistics due to its traditional nature, and because sometimes novelties in teaching in order to be successful should be embraced by clear policies as well as by an increased funding by the government which would enable separation from traditional teaching-learning and assessment methods. This indication comes mainly from the personal observation experience and from the feedback gathered from students and colleagues, who in general agree that the predominant method of language teaching in Kosovo relies on the Presentation, Practice and Production (PPP) pedagogic model.

Bearing that in mind, and also the overall trends of importance of acquiring the English written communication skill as a direct mean of success in studies and career, the purpose of this research was to analyse the level of mastering of the English language skills, through a questionnaire made of 22 statements addressed to English teachers and students of grade 12, as well as through an experimental test to the same students, in order to see the level of acquisition of their written English. It is to be expected that this research will present an added value for further more in depth studies on language skills acquisition, namely on acquisition of the English language writing skill by students that learn English as a foreign language in Kosovo.

2. Problem Statement

Despite the fact that English teaching in Kosovo starts quite early (from the kinder garden level), unfortunately students do not attain a proficient level of the English writing skill when they finish the 12 grade of upper secondary school level. This research tends to evaluate the level of the English language skill through specific tailored questionnaires and test targeting teachers and students of upper secondary schools in two separate profiles of schools, namely schools of social sciences and schools of natural sciences in order to analyse and evaluate differences in mastering the English writing skill between the two profiles. The leading hypothesis of the research are two followed by supporting hypothesis.

Hypothesis 1: *Students of the social profile school are expected to have better results of the writing skill than those of the natural profile; and Hypothesis 2: Curriculum presents an important factor in acquiring the written English skill, especially when extra curriculum.* Teaching methodology and level of competence and experience of teachers are important factor that influences the level of acquiring of the English writing skill by students, as teachers present one of the most important sources of mastering the skill of writing

2.1. Significance of the Study

English language skills used in an integrative approach are still not applied appropriately and sufficiently. This study explicitly focuses on the pedagogical implications in English writing skill through assessment of questionnaires addressed to students and teachers of that level, which would enable us analyse respective answers of students and teachers, and which consequently enable propose, recommend and possibly design new strategies and materials when teaching the writing skill, particularly to students of grade 12, who after finishing secondary school would need English in their future education and career. Another experimental method included administering an English test with the aim to see the level of acquisition of the written English skill and as well in order to supplement the significance of the study.

3. Literature Review on the Related Work

Since teaching and learning of language skills falls in the domain of applied linguistics namely in the teaching pedagogy, a considerable number of experts are of the opinion that English language skills present a must in further life prospects and in the field of teaching. In this regard, Jack C. Richards, highlights that employers, insist that their employees have good English language skills, and fluency in English is a prerequisite for success and advancement in many fields of employment in today's world. The demand for an appropriate teaching methodology is therefore as strong as ever (Richards, 2006). The teaching methodology does not anymore present a big challenge as in the past bearing in mind that globalization and availability of the modern computerization has offered a wide range of possibility of integrating audio visual aid in a holistic approach by using technology and media as a tool of professional development, and even by creating modelling software. According to Williams (cited in Ali Sabah Jameel Al-Khayyat, 2016), if the use of computer software is carefully modelled, it can offer students both assistance and autonomy in the writing process. In this vein, Ken Hyland thinks that "Reading may yield for students new knowledge within a subject area, but more importantly it provides them with the rhetorical and structural knowledge they need to develop, modify, and activate schemata which are invaluable when writing" (Hyland, 2004, p. 36). He elaborates on the linkage and importance of integration of reading and writing not only as skills of one genre but as a feature toward better knowledge of all language structures by highlighting that extensive reading can furnish a great deal of tacit knowledge of conventional features of written texts, including, grammar, vocabulary, organizational patterns, interactional devices, and so on. Therefore, he righteously thinks that what students read, particularly the relevance of the specific genres to which they are exposed are important elements (Ken Hyland, 2004). He qualifies that students and researchers must gain fluency in the conventions of academic discourses to understand their disciplines, establish their careers and to successfully navigate their learning (Hyland, 2009).

This view relates as well to the issue of effective teaching outcome, which of course set basis for the end result of acquisition of one skill. Related to this, Chris Kyriacou (2000) holds the opinion that the essence of effective teaching lies in the ability of the teacher to set up a learning experience that brings about the desired educational outcomes. Author Ken Hyland qualifies that students and researchers must gain fluency in the conventions of academic discourses to understand their disciplines, establish their careers and to successfully navigate their learning (Hyland, 2009).

There is a number of reasons that influence the level of language skills, namely the level of the written skill especially in the foreign language teaching and learning process. Learning to write in a foreign language presents a separate challenge particularly when two languages do not belong to the same phonetic system. And when the pressure to write professionally is added to it, then the burden is maximised.

The process of writing into a foreign language shows that this skill includes an active-cognitive process, as students are involved actively in the overall communication process, to recreate what was grasped by reading, listening and speaking in a given context. Thus, any exclusion of other three skills would be unrealistic and ineffective since language skills are closely related to each other. Therefore, teachers should only define realistic goals that can be achieved in the context of a classroom lesson. When teachers define their goals, they must use a variety of strategies, methods and teaching techniques in order to better interact with students and organize more effectively the various forms of teaching. Thus the objectives of teachers for a different relationship and a better quality of English teaching would focus primarily on understanding and use of language through activities and exercises that are similar to real-life situations, or as author Nunan states that in terms of a "mode continuum" from more like spoken language to more like written language, rather than in terms of discrete categories *(*Nunan, 1991, p. 99). Thus, key concepts, issues, trends, and identification of the main factors determining the process of acquiring the English language writing skill present a set of mandatory requirements in approaching the issue. To this end, analysis of pedagogical implications, directly contribute to improvement of the future process of learning and efficient acquisition of this skill.

4. Methodology of the Research

The research was carried out in two upper secondary schools one of social sciences and other of natural sciences in Kosovo, namely in Gjilan city, as it presents one of the three biggest cities in Kosovo. Participants were teachers who teach in both upper secondary schools of both profiles, (all nine) and students of the final grade (12) who learned English as a foreign language for nine years in primary school and for three years in the secondary school. In total there were 131 students chosen randomly: two classes from the social sciences and two other classes from natural profile. Questionnaires with approximately the same content were delivered to students first,

and then to teachers, who within a period of one week finished and returned them back to the researcher. Students were 17-18 years old and English language was their obligatory subject throughout years of schooling and during every year, in June they are obliged to prepare for the national school-leaving exam which includes a part of written English test too. Besides questionnaires, we carried out a qualitative methodology of analysis, which included an administered written English test in order to have a better understanding on the level of mastery of the writing skill. The test was delivered to the same students after they finalised the questionnaire. The test was taken from the English student's book that students learn from, *Liz & John Soars, Headway-Intermediate, third edition, p. 76.* As a result, the methodology of the research included a mixed method approach by comparing the quantitative findings of the questionnaires with teachers and students and by qualitative methodology of in-depth analysis of individual students written test assignment. Except questionnaires to students and teachers and testing of students as main instruments of the research, observation in respective school profiles during lessons of English language was another technique of assessment. The researcher observed for two weeks during English lessons in the two schools.

5. Analysis of Results

During the two-week intensive research, 131 students from two upper secondary schools (social sciences and natural sciences) were surveyed through a questionnaire. Moreover, nine English teachers of the respective schools were evaluated through a questionnaire, with the aim to gain a clearer insight on the level of mastery of the written English language skill, and its pedagogical implications, which would enable us draw more objective conclusions. The research was carried only with the 12th grade students as they constitute more realistic representative group, since they have learned English for a longer period of time compared to other grades. In addition, students of this grade are supposed to undergo the national test which includes English written test as a considerable percentage of ranking.[1] Moreover, they are potential students of the upcoming academic year where they have to undergo English as an obligatory exam during their first year of studies in all departments, both of state and private universities.

[1] With a proportion of 40 per cent of passing rate.

The research included two classes from the social and two classes from the natural school. The research in two schools was completed with the aim to make a comparative study in order to see similarities and differences based on the education curriculum, and to verify hypothesis that students of the social profile are expected to have better results of the writing skill than those of natural profile. The obtained data were processed by statistical methods, and results were interpreted and analysed to see any differences showed in the questionnaire regarding the level of understanding of pedagogical implications on the writing skill between students of these two schools. Moreover, the research included the experimental method through a written test with the aim to assess the level of mastery of the English language writing skill by the same age students of two different schools, and an analytical qualitative interpretation of the test was carried out. As stated, the respective test was taken from the book that students learn from (Liz & John Soars, *Headway Intermediate,* Oxford University Press, p. 76), and the decision to choose this book was taken in order that the tests comply with the linguistic level of students as decided from the ministry, and with the aim not to speculate over the validity of the test. The test included the full text copied from the respective book[1] (Liz & John Soars, Headway-Intermediate third edition dedicated to students of grade 12th).

Backing of the hypothesis that students of the social school are expected to have better results of the writing skill than those of natural profile was proved to be challenging as due to its semi-free nature of tasking it could not have been measured statistically per se. As such, the experimental test carried with students was analysed only qualitatively, backed up by the Kosovo Ministry of Education, Science and Technology English Language Curriculum (http://masht.rks-gov.net/English Language Curriculum), and per references of author Penny Ur (1999), in absence of a domestic standardised assessment tool of essays of students of that level. Thus, in the future in order to carry out a proper backed analysis of students' level of mastery of English writing skill, maybe a standardized testing such as TOEFL or cloze-procedure, cloze-testing or cloze techniques testing procedures for students might be used for more realistic finding and validity of exams and assessments of them from the perspective of quantitative methodology.

[1] The task assigned students to describe a person through two tasks. The first task enclosed six (6) questions to lead them to the correct instruction-based task of the text, to what students had to give brief answers. The second task assigned students to develop an essay in the following way: *Use your answers from exercise 1 to write a similar description of one of persons in your family. Include: your relation to him/her; your opinion of him/her; physical description and his/her character, habits, likes and dislikes. Keep description to 300 words.*

From analysis of a total of 131 written tests (2 classes of social and 2 classes of natural sciences), we concluded that students of the social profile showed poorer results of the writing skill than those of natural profile, which opposed the hypothesis of the research that *social sciences students show better result in English writing skill due to their prospective of social and language prompting studies.* One of the key factors of this result most probably derives from the students' success from primary schools as in Kosovo the best students tend to register natural sciences schools, whereas other students enrol in different other disciplines, including social sciences. Results of students of natural school, who showed higher competence of writing skill, where assessed based on the content of writing and evaluated per standards of numerical assessment in Kosovo from 1 as insufficient mark to 5 as excellent mar. Based on that, the assessment showed the following results:

Tabel 1. Results of students from natural sciences

66 Natural Sciences Students				
Marks from 1-5 as per standard assessment of students in the Kosovo school				
1-Insufficent	2-Sufficent	3-Good	4-Very good	5-Excellent
2	6	18	28	12

Tabel 2. Results of students from social sciences

65 Social Students				
Marks from 1-5 as per standard assessment of students in the Kosovo school				
1-Insufficent	2-Sufficent	3-Good	4-Very good	5-Excellent
11	22	20	8	4

As indicated, the numerical assessment was done also in reference to author Penny Ur, who proposes that the feedback on content is the most important rate in a written assignment of students. She adds two other criteria, the language used and organization of the text, however priority is given to the content, to what we are supportive of, bearing in mind that she highlights that the way ideas or events are written stand as significant and interesting (Penny, 1999). It is also to be noted that respective teachers expressed that a lot of students are not skilled writers in their first language that as an observation might set basis for a comparative study on what are similarities and differences of students in writing in L1 and L2.

During the observation time, it was noted that writing skill did not take its portion compared to other skills three skills: listening, speaking, and reading. Teachers were mainly focused on the reading skill, once read by the teachers as an instructed role, while the students read mostly on voluntarily basis. Most probably the main reason of "inattention" to the writing skill is due to the traditional foreign language teaching based on the supremacy of the audio-lingual where listening and reading take the

control. The observation period which took place before the questionnaires were handed out, sets basis for further specific analysis on observation only, as a separate technique of assessment of teaching.

On the other hand the collected and analysed data of the questionnaire to students of social sciences school presented in the form of the following chart revealed the following results:

Tabel 3. Analysed data of the questionnaire to students of social science

Q/N	Never	%	Rarely	%	Sometimes	%	Often	%	Always	%	Total	%
1	0	0%	1	2%	4	6%	7	11%	53	82%	65	100%
2	13	20%	10	15%	19	29%	12	18%	11	17%	65	100%
3	0	0%	4	6%	6	9%	14	22%	41	63%	65	100%
4	1	2%	6	9%	10	15%	20	31%	28	43%	65	100%
5	28	43%	7	11%	5	8%	11	17%	14	22%	65	100%
6	5	8%	5	8%	23	35%	15	23%	17	26%	65	100%
7	1	2%	4	6%	9	14%	6	9%	45	69%	65	100%
8	0	0%	2	3%	10	15%	8	12%	45	69%	65	100%
9	4	6%	22	34%	19	29%	11	17%	9	14%	65	100%
10	1	2%	6	9%	8	12%	20	31%	30	46%	65	100%
11	0	0%	3	5%	8	12%	17	26%	37	57%	65	100%
12	1	2%	4	6%	12	18%	9	14%	39	60%	65	100%
13	0	0%	5	8%	13	20%	12	18%	35	54%	65	100%
14	0	0%	1	2%	12	18%	18	28%	34	52%	65	100%
15	4	6%	6	9%	6	9%	11	17%	38	58%	65	100%
16	6	9%	9	14%	19	29%	12	18%	19	29%	65	100%
17	4	6%	4	6%	4	6%	13	20%	40	62%	65	100%
18	10	15%	11	17%	13	20%	6	9%	26	40%	65	102%
19	5	8%	5	8%	11	17%	10	15%	34	52%	65	100%
20	2	3%	3	5%	21	32%	23	35%	16	25%	65	100%
21	1	2%	0	0%	9	14%	17	26%	38	58%	65	100%
22	0	0%	2	3%	8	12%	14	22%	41	63%	65	100%
Total	86	6%	120	8%	249	17%	286	20%	690	48%	1430	100%

As it states, question number 1 whether plans and programs of the Ministry suggest inclusion of language skills, reveals that none of students was negative on this; 1 student thought that it rarely includes; 4 said sometimes; 7 often and it is interesting that 53 out of 65 students, or 83% declared it is always included. As a result it is quite convenient to find out that students think that plans of ministry suggest inclusion of skills as a primary topic, which corresponds to the objective of the writing skill presented in the book of planning of the Ministry of Education (masht.rks-gov.net/ English Language Curriculum**,** p. 42) that general objective is to *Enable learners to write with an increasing accuracy for specific purposes and different audiences.*

It is because of the fact that 83% thought that it is enough included, that's why second question on whether additional class material increases the writing skill reflects an interesting result as 20% of them said no, whereas 17% yes. However, the option number four *often* has been circled 12 times, which again tells that majority of them think there is a need.

In the statement that it is important to integrate all language skills while teaching English, on option never none of the students circled it, whereas 41, or 63% thought it is always important to integrate them together, which allows us think that students are aware on the importance of an integrative approach of all skills jointly. Statement number 4 *You stick to grammar rules and mechanics while writing in English,* the option always was utmost circled, by 41 students or 63%, which leads us to thinking that students are cautious that they stick, or they should stick to grammar rules, which not always has been seen as crucial in obtaining the language well. Quite contrary to expectations, on question 5 that *Mother tongue influence students' writing skill in English,* students thought that it does not as 43% of them said never, whereas only 14 or 22% said that it influences.

To question No 6 *you are able to write a good academic paragraph,* only 5 students replied negatively, whereas 17 said they can do it. Other answers, as stated above let us understand that students have the average of writing an academic paragraph, which might impede their future education possibilities bearing in mind that being able to write a good academic paragraph is a prerequisite to studying abroad or having good level of entry exam in faculties of Kosovo. Question number 7 *You are able to write a clear topic sentence* reveals satisfactory results as it tells that out of all 45 or 69% believe they can write clearly a topic sentence, which indicates that students contradict each-other in responding to questions as being not able to write an academic paragraph and on the other hand being able to write e clear academic sentence contradicts two-related competences in writing, even though depending on individuals sometimes it might not be the case.

Question number 8, which asked whether *they can rationally organize ideas when you write a paragraph,* has no negative answers, whereas 45 or again 69% think they can. If this answer is compared to the answer of teachers (the same q), it reveals that none of 9 teachers think students can rationally organize ideas. Teachers mostly 56% answered that students sometimes can do it. Based on this we can conclude that there is a discrepancy in the assessment between teachers and self-assessment, which needs more in depth analysis and maybe a specific tailored questionnaire with rubrics on self-assessment of writing of students.

To the question 9 *You can write in an academic style,* students of social sciences 4 said no, 9 said yes, which equals to mostly of answers 22 rarely and 19 sometimes, which tells that academic writing stands in the middle of an assessment between the understanding that they hardly can do it or at times.

Question 10 *You can use proper words to effectively pass the message,* it was interesting that majority of students, or 46% think they can use appropriate words, which inclines that use of specific vocabulary stands well in that regard. However, when compared to teachers, none thought that they can always do it; instead the option *rarely* and *sometimes* have been equally circled, four to four. Again this clashes the answers when compared to the opinions on ability to be competent in the vocabulary skill.

Question 11 on *You can use a variety of sentences in your writing* tells that 57% of students of social sciences think they can use a multiple range of sentences, which again in teachers' opinion is measured only with one teacher saying always. Other teachers stay between 4 for often 4 sometimes, and it is encouraging that none thought that students cannot. This inclination must be taken as positive due to the fact using variety of sentences is linked to quite competent speakers of a foreign language, and as such it helps the process of both content and expression (Hyland, 2004).

Question 12 on *You can use adequate punctuation rules* is between 1 students saying never and 39 thinking that they can always use adequate punctuation. On the other hand 2 Teachers think that students can rarely use rules, 4 think sometimes and 3 often. This match can be taken as in-between realisation of the grammar prerequisite in accuracy.

It is interesting to see that on Q 13 *You can write a summary of a text in English*, 57% think they can always write a summary, and 26% often, which if realised truly is quite promising knowing the fact that in order to write a summary in English one student should very clearly understand the written text and be able to have very good reading comprehension skills. To this question, 2 teachers answered that students can always do it, whereas none of them thought they cannot. 3 said often and 4 thought sometimes. Again this might be an indicator that teachers are more realistic in answering due to the latter explanation.

Question 14 on *You can make the difference between different kinds of essays,* 34 answered with always, none said never, and others stood between 28% for often and 12% sometimes. 2 answered rarely. If this is measured to a technical aspect of

understanding different sorts off essays it is quite encouraging. Teachers to this answered as students sometimes with most answers 67% or 6, whereas 1 said always. Three teachers circled option rarely. All this compared to option always with 52% versus 11% contradicts opinions on having a matching opinion on the question.

Question 15 on *you can divide essays in the main paragraphs (introduction, body, conclusion),* again the percentage of always was high-58%, whereas only 6% said that they cannot divide the essay. Teachers thought from 0% for always to utmost 44% for sometimes, that again inconsistencies opinions of both respondents. This question might have hinted at students formal-visual knowledge on division of paragraph as they answered positively, but bearing in mind that the only criteria of writing well is not on the visual layout of a text, perhaps further testing on real-content knowledge of division of essays should take place in future research.

Question	Never	%	Rarely	%	Sometimes	%	Often	%	Always	%	Total	%
1	3	5%	2	3%	11	17%	29	44%	21	32%	66	100%
2	3	5%	7	11%	23	35%	16	24%	17	26%	66	100%
3	0	0%	8	12%	15	23%	16	24%	27	41%	66	100%
4	7	11%	6	9%	12	18%	16	24%	25	38%	66	100%
5	9	14%	13	20%	17	26%	17	26%	10	15%	66	100%
6	6	9%	9	14%	20	30%	18	27%	13	20%	66	100%
7	0	0%	0	0%	13	20%	22	33%	31	47%	66	100%
8	1	2%	1	2%	17	26%	22	33%	25	38%	66	100%
9	5	8%	11	17%	18	27%	21	32%	11	17%	66	100%
10	2	3%	1	2%	16	24%	23	35%	24	36%	66	100%
11	4	6%	3	5%	9	14%	21	32%	29	44%	66	100%
12	4	6%	3	5%	12	18%	18	27%	29	44%	66	100%
13	1	2%	1	2%	11	17%	16	24%	38	58%	66	100%
14	0	0%	9	14%	15	23%	17	26%	25	38%	66	100%
15	2	3%	6	9%	7	11%	11	17%	40	61%	66	100%
16	2	3%	16	24%	18	27%	22	33%	8	12%	66	100%
17	7	11%	11	17%	18	27%	15	23%	15	23%	66	100%
18	8	12%	10	15%	15	23%	16	24%	17	26%	66	100%
19	2	3%	7	11%	20	30%	17	26%	20	30%	66	100%
20	1	2%	4	6%	20	30%	26	39%	15	23%	66	100%
21	0	0%	7	11%	22	33%	17	26%	20	30%	66	100%
22	4	6%	5	8%	14	21%	19	29%	24	36%	66	100%
Total	71	5%	140	10%	343	24%	415	29%	484	33%	1452	100%

Question 16 on *You ask for teacher's support while you are writing an essay,* options always and often have been mostly circled, both 29%, often is 18% , whereas 14% is for rarely and 9% for never. Teachers to this have answered with 44% to sometimes option, whereas always and often is 22% and only one answered rarely. None said never. This finding tells that opinions match somehow, maybe due to the fact that while writing, support is not very commendable, but support and feedback should rather be throughout the entire process of teaching and learning.

Question 17 *Teacher supports you during the writing process*, 62% said always whereas only 6% said never. It is interesting that both questions relate to each other, but relation to answering is different as in Q 16 students answer to ask for teachers support with 29% and in Q 17 it is raised to 62%.Teachers as well think that (see the question) they help students with 56% saying yes, 11% often, 22% sometimes, whereas only 1 teacher said never.

Question 18 *Teacher allows you using dictionaries while writing,* revealed that students are allowed to do that with 40%, whereas only 10 or 15% of them said never. Others as stated in the graphics stand in between, which allows us conclude that teachers allow use of dictionaries in general.

Question 19 on y*ou use pre-writing phases (e.g. brainstorming, taking notes)* is quite encouraging as 52% of students said to do that, whereas only 8% say never. This tells that in case majority of students are able to use pre-writing phases, then the ambivalence of mistakes lowers.

To question number 20 *You can write under time constraints* most of students wrote to be in between often with 35%, sometimes with 32% and always with 25%, which is interesting as it shows that time constrains might be individual and psychological if they are about to write under such restrictions.

On the question 21 *you can write quickly*, it is interesting to see that 58% or 38 said they can do it, whereas 1 said never, 14% said sometimes, often said 17 or 26%. To write quickly means to be quite competent as there is an intrinsic individual connection established, or as author Ann Raimes says *the relationship between writing and thinking makes writing a valuable part of any language course* (Raimes, 1983, p.).

Question 22 *Teachers give written feedback as a form of students' writing assessment*, revealed again good results as none said ever, only 2 said rarely, 8 said sometimes, 14 often, and 41 said always. This finding is quite encouraging as written feedback makes a very good link between tasks/feedback and assessment. Questionnaire addressed to students of natural sciences presented in the form of the following chart revealed the subsequent results:

Tabel 4. Analysed data of the questionnaire to students of natural sciences

Question	Never	%	Rarely	%	Sometimes	%	Often	%	Always	%	Total	%
1	3	5%	2	3%	11	17%	29	44%	21	32%	66	100%
2	3	5%	7	11%	23	35%	16	24%	17	26%	66	100%
3	0	0%	8	12%	15	23%	16	24%	27	41%	66	100%
4	7	11%	6	9%	12	18%	16	24%	25	38%	66	100%
5	9	14%	13	20%	17	26%	17	26%	10	15%	66	100%
6	6	9%	9	14%	20	30%	18	27%	13	20%	66	100%
7	0	0%	0	0%	13	20%	22	33%	31	47%	66	100%
8	1	2%	1	2%	17	26%	22	33%	25	38%	66	100%
9	5	8%	11	17%	18	27%	21	32%	11	17%	66	100%
10	2	3%	1	2%	16	24%	23	35%	24	36%	66	100%
11	4	6%	3	5%	9	14%	21	32%	29	44%	66	100%
12	4	6%	3	5%	12	18%	18	27%	29	44%	66	100%
13	1	2%	1	2%	11	17%	16	24%	38	58%	66	100%
14	0	0%	9	14%	15	23%	17	26%	25	38%	66	100%
15	2	3%	6	9%	7	11%	11	17%	40	61%	66	100%
16	2	3%	16	24%	18	27%	22	33%	8	12%	66	100%
17	7	11%	11	17%	18	27%	15	23%	15	23%	66	100%
18	8	12%	10	15%	15	23%	16	24%	17	26%	66	100%
19	2	3%	7	11%	20	30%	17	26%	20	30%	66	100%
20	1	2%	4	6%	20	30%	26	39%	15	23%	66	100%
21	0	0%	7	11%	22	33%	17	26%	20	30%	66	100%
22	4	6%	5	8%	14	21%	19	29%	24	36%	66	100%
Total	71	5%	140	10%	343	24%	415	29%	484	33%	1452	100%

This graphic presentation of natural school when analysed and compared to the outcomes of the social school reveals differences in the answers provided but not so many. Thus, our hypothesis that there are differences in opinionating statements is validated, except question number one (see below). A lot of them present similar or almost matching results, but still the discrepancy was bigger than the similarity. In order to get the most significant equivalences, through a table below more typical similarities are presented, and that in this form of arrangement in order to be more decipherable, and easier to identify statements that had more discrepant answers:

Tabel 5. The most similar results between two schools (social and natural)

Never				Rare				Sometimes						Often		Always			
Social		Natural		Social		Natural		Social		Natural		Social		Natural		Social		Natural	
Q3	0%	Q3	0%	Q1	2%	Q1	3%	Q9	29 %	Q9	27%	Q3	29 %	Q3	24 %	Q6	26 %	Q6	20 %
Q7	2%	Q7	0%	Q2	15 %	Q2	11 %	Q12	18 %	Q2	Q20 %	Q10	31 %	Q10	35 %	Q9	17 %	Q9	14 %
Q8	0%	Q8	2%	Q4	9%	Q4	9%	Q13	20 %	9%	Q17 %	Q14	28 %	Q14	26 %	Q13	58 %	Q13	54 %
Q9	6%	Q9	8%	Q8	3%	Q8	2%	Q15	9%	20	Q11 %	Q15	17 %	Q15	17 %	Q15	61 %	Q15	58 %
Q10	2%	Q10	3%	Q11	5%	Q11	5%	Q16	29 %	Q16	Q27 %	Q17	20 %	Q17	23 %	Q20	23 %	Q20	25 %
Q13	0%	Q13	2%	Q12	6%	Q12	5%	Q18	20 %	Q18	Q23 %	Q20	35 %	Q20	39 %				
Q14	0%	Q14	0%	Q15	9%	Q15	9%	Q20	32 %	Q20	Q32 %	Q21	26 %	Q21	26 %				
Q15	6%	Q15	3%	Q18	17 %	Q18	15 %												
Q18	15 %	Q18	12%	Q20	5%	Q20	6%												
Q20	3%	Q20	2%																
Q21	2%	Q21	0%																
Q22	0%	Q22	6%																

Additionally, the most similar results between two schools were related to the following questions presented in the graphics above, but in order to reflect more vibrant results we are also presenting statements as they were put in the questionnaire:

Tabel 6. Compared results between two social and natural schools (S-indicates social while M indicates maths)

Never	
Questions: 3.7.8.9.10.13.14.15. 18.20.21.22	3. It is important to integrate all language skills while teaching English S-0%; M-0% 7. You are able to write a clear topic sentence S-2%; M 0% 8. You can rationally organize ideas when you write a paragraph-S-0%-M 2% 9. You can write in an academic style S-6%; M-8% 10. You can use proper words to effectively pass the message S-2%; M-3% 13. You can write a summary of a text in English S-0%; M-2% 14. You can make the difference between different kinds of essays S-0%; M-0% 15. You can divide essays in the main paragraphs (introduction, body, conclusion) S-6%; M-3% 18. Teacher allows you using dictionaries while writing S-15%; M-12% 20. You can write under time constraints S-3%; M-2% 21. You can write quickly S-2%; M-0% 22. Teachers give written feedback as a form of students' writing assessment S-0%; M-6%
Rarely	
Questions: 1,2,4,8,11,12,15,18, 20	1. Lessons in the English student's book suggest inclusion of language skills (listening, speaking writing, reading) S-2%; M-3% 2. Additional class material besides mandatory books increases the writing skill S-15%; M-11% 4. You stick to grammar rules and mechanics while writing in English S-9%; M-9% 8. You can write in an academic style S-3%; M-2% 11. You can rationally organize ideas when you write a paragraph S-5%; M-5% 12. You can use adequate punctuation rules S-6%; M-5% 15. You can divide essays in the main paragraphs (introduction, body, conclusion) S-9%; M-9%

	18. Teacher allows you using dictionaries while writing S-17%; M-15% 20. You can write under time constraints S-5%; M-6%
Sometimes	
Questions: 9,12,13,15,16,18,20	9. You can write in an academic style S-29%; M-27% 12. You can use adequate punctuation rules S-18%; M-20% 13. You can write a summary of a text in English-S-20%; M-17% 15. You can divide essays in the main paragraphs (introduction, body, conclusion)S-9%; M-11% 16. You ask for teacher's support while you are writing an essay S-29%; M-27% 18. Teacher allows you using dictionaries while writing S-20%; M-23%
Often	
Questions:3,10,14, 15,17,20, 21	3. It is important to integrate all language skills while teaching English S-22%; M-24% 10. You can use proper words to effectively pass the message S-31%; M-35% 14. You can make the difference between different kinds of essays S-28%; M-26% 15. You can divide essays in the main paragraphs (introduction, body, conclusion)S-17%; M-17% 17. Teacher supports you during the writing process S-20%; M-23% 20. You can write under time constraints S-35%; M-39% 21. You can write quicklyS-26%; M-26%
Always	
Questions: 6,9,13,15,20	6. You are able to write a good academic paragraph S-26%; M-20% 9. You can write in an academic style S-17%; M-14% 13. You can write a summary of a text in English S-58%; M-54% 15. You can divide essays in the main paragraphs (introduction, body, conclusion) S-61%; M-58% 20. You can write under time constraints S-23%; M-25%

Tabel 7. Data on discrepant answers between two schools

Discrepant answers per number of circled statements				
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
1,2,4,5,6,11, 12,16,17,19	3,5,6,7,9,13,14, 1617,19,21,22	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11,14, 17, 19, 21, 22, 23	1,2,4,5,6,7,8,9, 11,12,13,16,18,19, 22, 23	1,2,3,4,5,7,8,10,11,12,14, 16,17,18,19,21,22,23
10 statements are discrepant	12 statements are discrepant	16 statements are discrepant	16 statements are discrepant	18 statements are discrepant

Tabel 8. Results of questionnaires of nine teachers from both schools

Question	Never	%	Rarely	%	Sometimes	%	Often	%	Always	%	Total	%
1	0	0	1	11%	3	33%	3	33%	2	22%	9	100%
2	0	0	0	0%	2	22%	4	44%	3	33%	9	100%
3	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	2	22%	7	78%	9	100%
4	0	0	0	0%	4	44%	4	44%	1	11%	9	100%
5	0	0	2	22%	3	33%	4	44%	0	0%	9	100%
6	0	0	0	0%	7	78%	2	22%	0	0%	9	100%
7	0	0	0	0%	4	44%	5	56%	0	0%	9	100%
8	0	0	0	0%	5	56%	4	44%	0	0%	9	100%
9	0	0	4	44%	4	44%	1	11%	0	0%	9	100%
10	0	0	0	0%	6	67%	3	33%	0	0%	9	100%
11	0	0	0	0%	4	44%	4	44%	1	11%	9	100%
12	0	0	2	22%	4	44%	3	33%	0	0%	9	100%
13	0	0	0	0%	4	44%	3	33%	2	22%	9	100%
14	0	0	2	22%	6	67%	0	0%	1	11%	9	100%
15	0	0	2	22%	4	44%	3	33%	0	0%	9	100%
16	0	0	1	11%	4	44%	2	22%	2	22%	9	100%
17	0	0	1	11%	2	22%	1	11%	5	56%	9	100%
18	0	0	3	33%	2	22%	3	33%	1	11%	9	100%
19	0	0	0	0%	4	44%	4	44%	1	11%	9	100%
20	0	0	2	22%	5	56%	2	22%	0	0%	9	100%
21	0	0	1	11%	6	67%	1	11%	1	11%	9	100%
22	0	0	3	33%	3	33%	1	11%	2	22%	9	100%
Total	0	0%	24	12%	86	43%	59	30%	29	15%	198	100

Findings' analyses of teachers were incorporated in the above stated analysis of students' findings).

6. Conclusions

This research evaluated the current situation of the level of mastering of the English writing skill in upper secondary schools in Kosovo through two particular representative students 'groups of upper secondary schools, namely students of grade 12 in schools of social sciences and natural students. As per analysis of responds of students of both schools and of respective English teachers, the following conclusions were drawn:

- It is factual that curriculum presents an important factor in acquiring the written English skill, especially when extra curriculum activities are attached to the mandatory material (Hypothesis 1)

- Teaching methodology and level of competence and experience of teachers are important factor that influences the level of acquiring of the English writing skill by students, as teachers present one of the most important sources of mastering the skill of writing (Hypothesis 2).

- Inclusion of novelties in teaching the foreign language involves students' attention more than using curriculum based instructions only (Hypothesis 5).

- The L1 (mother's tongue) interferes into the writing skill of the targeted language L2 (Hypothesis 9).

- On the other hand the proposed hypothesis (The social upper secondary schools are expected to have better results of the writing skill than those of natural upper secondary school) for the research proved not to be true, as from test results students of natural upper secondary school showed higher competence of the writing skill which based on the overall content of writing and against the standards of numerical assessment in Kosovo gave opposing results versus hypothesis.

6.1. Recommendations

- Since students are aware on the importance of mastering English language skill as a prerequisite of further academic and career development, education authorities of Kosovo should pay added attention by creating specific instructions based on schools profile on how to teach language skills in order for students to be able to use them in an integrative way;

- Since teachers showed good understanding on importance of inclusion of the writing skill in an integrated way, they may participate more interactively in their joint planning as council of English teachers;

- Students of upper secondary education need more instructions, namely clearer drillings with the aim to develop effective writing;

- Teachers should plan to teach writing as an oriented-inclusive process in order to enable students to organise themselves as independent "writers";

- Ideas about practical tips on both the process and the product of the writing should be part of the teaching lessons; they should not be dealt separately;

- Grammar, punctuation, choice of appropriate words and sentence linking words may be learned in an integrative approach with other skills;

- In terms of concrete implications for teaching English writing skill, teachers could strategize better in making writing an everyday activity by communicative language teaching (CLT) and task-based language teaching (TBLT) as complementary to each other and in fact one methodology of teaching (Nunan, 2015) in the classroom, in order to boost the level of

knowledge of applied linguistic skills, bearing in mind that even in the advanced education systems such as Norway is, apparently the English that many of them (students) learn during their compulsory and upper secondary school education is inadequate for the literacy demands in English placed on them in Higher Education (Drew, 2009).

- Since writing is a very important long life used skill, or as author David Nunan says "Like reading, writing is not only a tool for communication but also an instrument for intellectual growth and development", (Nunan, 2015), teachers and students should engage in innovatory writing practices based on identified needs of students;
- Since English teachers in Kosovo still practice the grammar teaching methodology, the Education Ministry should hire specialised experts in providing training to move from that to new methodologies by providing specific training; and
- In conclusion, in order to know final results of the writing skill, a study on complexity stems of factors should be carried out as students that enter different schools are not of the same level and readiness to learn writing skill from the same books, as currently the practice in Kosovo is.

References

Anderson, A. & Lynch, T. (1988). *Listening,* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bright, M.; Mcmullin, L. & Platt, D. (1998). *From your child's teacher: helping your child learn to read, write and speak.* Edmonton, AB: FP: Hendriks Publishing.

Carter, R. & Nunan, D. (2001). *Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages.* Cambridge University Press.

Celce-Murcia, Marianne, (1991). *Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language.* Heinle & Heinle Publishers.

Cook, Guy (2003). *Applied Linguistics*. Oxford University Press.

Kyriacou, Chris (2009). *Effective teaching in schools-theory and practice.* Stanley Thorns.

Nunan, David (2015). *Teaching English to speakers of other languages.* Routledge.

Kolb, D.A. (1984). *Experiental Learning*.Prentice Hall.

Ellis, Rod (2003). *Second Language Acquisition.* Oxford University Press.

Ellis, Rod (1994). *The study of second language acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Fisher, R. (2008). *Teaching Thinking: Philosophical Enquiry in the Classroom* (3rd Edition). London: Continuum.

Zwissig, Françoise (2000). Gisela Perren- Klingler. *Mësojmë me të gjitha shqisat.* SAH, Zurich.

Fullan, Majkëll, (2001). *Kuptimi i ri i ndryshimit në arsim*. Edualba, Tiranë.

Fautley, M. and Savage, J. (2008). *Assessment for Learning and Teaching in Secondary Schools.* Exeter: Learning Matters.

Gage, Nathaniel (2008). *A conception of Teaching.* Springer.

Gardner, H. (2006). *Multiple Intelligences: New Horizons in Theory and Practice.* 2nd Edition. New York: Basic Books.

Gardner, J. (ed.) (2006). *Assessment and Learning.* London: Sage.

Gjokutaj Mimoza, Mërkuri Nexhip, *Modele të suksesshme mësimdhënie,* Europrint, Tiranë.

Grup autorësh (2002). *Kurrikula dhe Shkolla*. Gjuhë e huaj 2, Tiranë.

Grup autorësh (2001). *Të nxënit në bashkëpunim, Udhëzues 5, KEC, ARA.*

Grup autorësh (2001). *Teknika të tjera për zhvillimin e të menduarit kritik, Udhëzues 4, KEC, ARA.*

Halliday, M.A.K.M. & Macintosh, Strevens Peter (1964). *The Linguistic Sciences and Language Teaching, Longmans.*

Harmer, Jeremy (2004). *The Practice of English Language Teaching.* Longman.

Hyland, Ken (2009). *Academic Evaluation*. Pacgrave Macmillian.

Hyland, Ken (2012). *Stance and Voice in Written Academic Genres*. Pacgrave Macmillian.

Hyland, Ken *(*2009).*Teaching and researching writing,* Pearson.

Kellogg, R.T. (2008). *Training writing skills: A cognitive developmental perspective. Journal of writing research*.

Korniza Kurrikulare e Arsimit Parauniversitar të Republikës së Kosovës, retrieved from https://masht.rks-gov.net/uploads/2017/03/korniza-kurrikulare-finale.pdf, June 2017.

Lado, Robert *(*1964). *Language Teaching. Svjetlost, Sarajevo.*

Musai, Bardhyl (2005). *Mësimdhënia dhe të nxënit ndërveprues 6-12.* Tiranë.

Troyka, Lynn Quitman (1996). Simon & Schuster. *Handbook for Writers.* Prentice Hall.

Marzano, R.J. (2007). *The art and science of teaching*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Morgan, John & Rinvolucri, Mario (1999). *Vocabulary.* Oxford University Press.

Musai, Bardhyl (2001). Grup autorësh Ballhysa A., Gjekutaj M., Kërçiku L., Plangarica T. dhe Zisi A). *Modele për mësimdhënie të suksesshme-Teknika për zhvillimin të mendurait kritik,* EduALBA, Tiranë.

Musai, Bardhyl, *(*2005). *Mësimdhënia dhe të nxënit ndërveprues 1-5,* Tiranë.

Musai, Bardhyl & Vrapi, Rrezana (2003). *Të gjithë ne jemi inteligjentë.* Tiranë.

Nunan, David (1992). *Research Methods in language Learning*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Pettijohn, Terry (1996). *Psikologjia.* Lilo, Tiranë.

Peck, J. & Coyle, M. (2005). 2nd *The Student's Guide to Writing: Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling*. Hampshire: Palgrave.

Raimes, Ann (1983). Teaching writing: what we know and what we do. The educational resources information center (ERIC).

Richards, J.C. (1990). *The Language Teaching Matrix*. Cambridge University Press.

Rost, Michael (1991). *Listening in action: activities for developing in Language Education*. Hemel Hempstead: Prentice Hall International.

Scrivener, Jim (1998). *Learning Teaching.* Macmillan-Heinemann.

Spada, Nina & Patsy m. Lightbown (1999). *How languages are learned.* Oxford University Press.

Troike-Muriel Saville, (1976). *Foundations for teaching english as a Second Language.* Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Tognini-Bonelli, E. (2001). Corpus Linguistics at work. Amsterdam: Benjamins Studies in Corpus Linguistics 6.

Ur, Penny, (1999). *A Course in Language Teaching – Practice and Theory.* Cambridge University Press.

Ur, Penny, (1984). *Teaching Listening Comprehension*. Cambridge University Press.

Zwiers, Jeff (2005). *Zhvillimi i shprehive të të menduarit në klasat 6-12, Manual veprimtarish mësimore për inteligjencat e shumëfishta.* Tiranë.

Woolfolk, A. (2007). *Educational Psychology.* 10th Edition. Boston: Pearson.

Woolfolk, A.; Hughes, M. & Walkup, V. (2008). *Psychology in Education.* London.