



**Deanship of Graduate Studies
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**An Analysis of the Writing Skill Exercises and Activities
in "English for Palestine" from Grade One to Twelve**

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Dedication

I give my deepest appreciation for the encouragement that he gave me and the sacrifices during my education: to my beloved husband

To my beloved sons: Jacob, Hanna and Elias who give me strength to achieve my dreams

To my dearest daughter: Yuliana

To my parents for their endless support

To my sisters and my only brother who have been a great source of motivation and inspiration

To my parents' in law for their patience that they have shown to me during my studying

Declaration:

I certify that this thesis submitted for the degree of Master, is the result of my own research, except where otherwise acknowledged, and that this study or any part of the same has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other university or institution.

Signed:**Name:** Rula Muneer Hanna Qumsiyeh**Date:** 26/5/2012

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Abbreviations

L1: It is the language a person has learned from birth. (Mother tongue or native language).

L2: A second language (L2) is any language learned after the first language or mother tongue (L1).

EFL: English as a foreign language. It is for learners in whose community English is not the usual language of communication. They may be learning English as a school subject, or for travel.

FL: Foreign Language

Abstract

The present study attempts to analyze the writing activities and exercises in *English for Palestine* textbooks from grades (1-12) in the scholastic year (2011-2012), and explores EFL teachers' perspective about the efficacy of the activities and exercises.

The methodical procedure was analytical and descriptive study. Three instruments were used to obtain information, an interview, a questionnaire and a writing activity checklist. The target of the study consisted of all *English for Palestine* textbooks (1-12). The study was also conducted on English teachers. The study population is (226) teachers, (79) males and (147) females. The researcher chose a stratified sample of about (40 %) of the population. More precisely, the sample consisted of (93) teachers; (33) males and (60) females, and the questionnaire was conducted as a second tool for obtaining the needed information for this study, it has (21) items. Furthermore, an interview was carried to support the study results.

These data were analyzed by the computer using (SPSS) program. The researcher used statistical methods to extract the means, percentages, standard deviations and t-test for independent variables and test analysis of variance (One Way ANOVA) to test the hypotheses.

The researcher found that there were no differences at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) regardless of the different variables of the study (gender, qualifications, years of experience, grades taught).

In light of this study, the researcher recommends the following:
EFL teachers must cover the student books and workbooks materials to help students develop their writing skill. It is also recommended that teachers should help students to interact with various activities and exercises that are favorable and applicable. There are other minor findings and recommendations in this study.

الملخص

هدفت هذه الدراسة الى تحليل الانشطة والتمارين الكتابية في مناهج اللغة الانجليزية الفلسطينية من الصفوف (1-12) لعام (2011-2012). وأيضاً تبحث عن مدى فعالية هذه الانشطة والتمارين الكتابية من وجهة نظر معلمي اللغة الانجليزية.

ولأنها دراسة تحليلية وصفية، تم استخدام ثلاثة أدوات وهي: المقابلة واستبيان وقائمة رصد انشطة مهارة الكتابة، وتالفة مجتمع الدراسة من جميع كتب اللغة الانجليزية من الصفوف (1-12) وبالإضافة إلى ذلك، تم تطبيق الدراسة على معلمي اللغة الانجليزية، وتكون مجتمع الدراسة من (226) معلم ومعلمة، (79) ذكور و(119) إناث.

اختارت الباحثة عينة طبقية وتمثلت بنسبة 40% من مجتمع الدراسة. وللدقابة أكثر، تكونت العينة من (93) معلم ومعلمة ، فكان عدد المعلمين (33) وعدد المعلمات (60)، وتكونت الأداة الثانية من استبيان واشتغلت على (21) فقرة، بالإضافة إلى الاستبيان، تم إجراء مقابلة لدعم نتائج الدراسة. وتم SPSS تحليل هذه البيانات بواسطة الحاسوب واستخدام برنامج

واستخدمت الباحثة أساليب احصائية تتمثل في استخراج المتوسطات الحسابية والنسب المئوية والانحرافات المعيارية واستخدام اختبار للعينات المستقلة واختبار تحليل التباين الاحادي لفحص واختبار فرضيات الدراسة. وبعد معالجة وتحليل البيانات توصلت الباحثة بعدم وجود فروق في مستوى الدلالة بغض النظر للمتغيرات المختلفة في الدراسة (الجنس، المؤهل العلمي، سنوات الخبرة، الصفوف التي تدرس).

في ضوء نتائج هذه الدراسة، فقد أوصت الباحثة ما يلي على معلمي اللغة الانجليزية إنهاء كتاب الطالب وكتاب العمل لمساعدة الطلاب في تطوير مهارة الكتابة، وأيضاً على المعلمين مساعدة الطلاب في التفاعل مع انشطة وتمارين متعددة وقابلة للتطبيق. وهناك بعض التوصيات الفرعية توجد في هذه الدراسة.

Chapter One

Problem of the study and its significance

1:1Introduction

1:1 Importance of the writing skill

1:2Problem of the study

1:3The Research Questions

1:4Hypotheses of the study

1:5Purpose of the Study

1:6Significance of the Study

1:7Limitations of the Study

1:8Definition of terms

Chapter One

1:1Introduction

English is an international language especially used in technology, business, science and research, education and politics. According to Bayyurt (2010) it is an undeniable fact that English has become a medium of communication for world nations, as it is the most commonly spoken foreign language. Hasman (2000) points out over 1.4 billion people live in countries where English has an official status. Over 70% of the world's scientists read English, over 85% of the world's mail is written in English and 90% of information in the world's electronic retrieval system is stored in English. Hasman suggests that by 2010, speakers of English as a second or foreign language (SL/FL) will exceed the number of native speakers. English has become a key factor in the development of nations.

Abunniaj (1992) reports that there is a tendency among teachers of English abroad, especially in Europe and the British Council commonwealth, to assume that English is studied chiefly as a means of becoming acquainted with life, literature and institutions of the English speaking people. English is being taught as a tool for international understanding, as it has become a gateway to many countries such as Japan, India, the Arab World, and many other countries. Furthermore, it facilitates cultural exchange with Britain, America, Australia and the rest of the English speaking world.

Nowadays, it is generally acknowledged that learning at least one foreign language improves different opportunities which are the first goal for the Palestinian English curriculum. English is taught officially in Palestine's public schools from the first grade to the twelfth grade. Dajani and McLaughlin (2009) mention that the Palestinians, through generations of conflict and military occupation, have always placed emphasis on foreign English education as a means to a better future. For young Palestinians to be successful in future global economy, they need to be articulate and artful communicators in the world's "lingua franca". The curriculum document construes the English language as a key resource which can offer Palestinians a competitive edge in the world of global communications. In acknowledgment of its importance in global communications, English is now a core subject in the humanities stream; however, it is given the same weight

in the scientific stream in the first Palestinian National Curriculum from the first grade (age 6) till the twelfth grade (age 17).

In order to enhance our nation's competitiveness at the world stage, the Ministry of Education in Palestine is devoted to promote English learning. Therefore,

English has been given the following status in the Palestinian curriculum.

1. English is applied to be taught from the first grade for the first time in the year 2000.
2. English is allocated 3 classes, 40 minutes each per week for the lower primary stage (1-4); 4 classes, 40 minutes each per week for the upper primary stage (5-7) and allocated 5 classes, 40 minutes per week for the upper primary stage (8-10).
3. English is allocated 5 classes, 40 minutes per week for the secondary stage (11th -12th).
4. English is an obligatory subject for all students in both public and private schools.

1:1 Importance of the writing skill

Writing efficiently in English is a tool for communication between people. Many vital reactions require writing well in English, for example, e-mailing friends, chatting with friends, surfing the computer or reading articles. By contrast, EFL students can improve their writing through practice and hard work. Normally, all learners of English as a foreign language need to work hard on their writing skills in order to be good communicators for both educational and interactional purposes.

Moreover, writing is a means of sharing ideas among people. Successful writing technique takes time especially phrases and the logical organization of terms and expressions. Furgerson (2004) points out that writing is an important part of our daily lives. Through writing, we express our thoughts, ideas, feelings and desires. The writer's goal is to successfully communicate a message, no matter how simple. It first starts out with an idea and through a sophisticated process, and then it is translated into a written format.

McGregor and Bright (1970) state that writing is one of the most important skills a learner of English as a second language needs. Most English teachers

complain that students of English are weak in this skill; many of whom cannot write a paragraph in the first year of the secondary stage.

Writing in English is proved as a vital and effective skill in students' future. According to Sherwood - Smith (1991) points that written language has its own functions in society, and its own linguistic patterns-all of which must be taken into account by learners of any language. Grabe and Kaplan (1996) mention that EFL students will need English writing skills ranging from simple sentences, to paragraphs, to the ability to write essays and professional articles.

Without a doubt, writing helps people share their opinions, beliefs, arguments with each other. It allows people to share and communicate not only with their contemporaries, but also with generations to come. Furthermore, writing is talking to others on computer screens or on papers. It is also a way of discovering and organizing one's ideas by arranging and revising them.

According to Alwasilah (2005), writing is a skill, an ability in delivering ideas into texts so it can be accepted by intellectual and social readers. Everyone is able to have writing skills. We can start to write at any time as long as there is a strong wellness to be able to write. In addition, writing gives students the opportunity to turn their spoken language into written symbols. Widdowson (1987) points that writing is the matter of use, and composing is the act of usage. Rice and Burns (1986) suggest that writing is not any longer viewed as a simple activity that consists of several stages that are independent and logically sequenced. By contrast, writing is now recognized as a difficult, integrated set of processes that are interactive and recursive. It involves the creation of ideas and the ability to express them logically.

Al khuli (1995) points out that writing is the major skill involved in learning a foreign language, which helps the writer to convey messages. Students should be challenged to use what they know to construct their thoughts into a pattern which is easily understood by the audience. They should depend on the written mode and not only on the spoken mode to communicate, as they are equally important.

Boonpattanaporn (2001) suggests that writing is a productive skill that needs various competencies such as linguistic, sociolinguistic and discourse knowledge. Other knowledge about language use also needed, like grammar, structure ,and vocabulary. Furthermore, writing also calls for strategies and

an organized critical way of thinking; therefore, writing is not only a single activity but a series of interrelated activities.

According to Al-Sharah (1988) writing is a thinking process that involves grammar and vocabulary. The aim of any writer is to produce and present the target readers well-organized, appropriate for communicating the intended message. Therefore, writing must be effective, great enough to satisfy and persuade the audience.

Furthermore, written language helps you take correct actions, moving easily among facts and opinions without hesitating. It advances your ability to ask good questions, to give you a good feedback about the matter.

1:2 Problem of the study

The problem of this study appears when the researcher identifies the writing activities and exercises in the Palestinian curricula. It is believed that there is a correlation between teachers' style and students' achievement, the researcher has noticed during her teaching in the public schools that students can't write or form correct sentences, so it is important to determine whether recent textbooks are adequately presenting appropriate tasks for teaching the necessary components. So, the researcher intends to analyze the writing skill exercises and activities in the Palestinian curricula and determine what tasks are included for developing students' abilities to be effective writers in the future.

1:3 The Research Questions

This study attempts to answer the following questions:

- 1- What are the types of writing activities included in the Palestinian curricula?
- 2- Do the teachers' opinions differ about the writing curricula activities and exercises that can be attributed to (gender, qualifications, years of experience, and levels they taught)?
- 3- Do the activities and strategies included in the text books guarantee students' mastery of the skill?

1:4 Hypotheses of the Study

Hypothesis Number One:

There are no differences at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) of the teachers' opinions about the writing skill activities and exercises due to gender.

Hypothesis Number Two:

There are no differences at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) of the teachers' opinions about the writing skill activities and exercises due to qualifications.

Hypothesis Number Three:

There are no differences at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) of the teachers' opinions about the writing skill activities and exercises due to years of experience.

Hypothesis Number Four:

There are no differences at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) of the teachers' opinions about the writing skill activities and exercises due to grades taught.

1:5 Purpose of the Study

Writing as a skill plays an important role in learning foreign languages because of the many benefits it provides. It helps learners to gain proficiency and gain knowledge. English writing plays the irreplaceable role in English language education. So, this study concentrates on analyzing the content of English for Palestine from grade one to twelve with regard to the development of the writing skills across all grade levels. The purpose of the study is to perform a descriptive analysis of writing tasks in the Palestinian curricula.

1:6 Significance of the Study

English for Palestine is a new curriculum which was developed by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education to be taught in the public schools in Palestine since the year 2000. A number of studies were conducted on “English for Palestine” which investigated different criteria focusing on the design of the book themselves. However, there were no studies as far as the researcher concerned, on the development of the writing skill in “English for Palestine”. Therefore, this is the first detailed study that attempts to describe and analyze the writing activities. On the other hand, the findings of this study may shed light on the points of strength and weakness of “English for Palestine” for potential improvement of the writing activities.

1:7 Limitations of the Study

The study is applied in accordance with these limitations:

1. Time limitation: Scholastic year is (2011-2012).
2. Place limitation: Palestinian Education system. The study was limited to analyzing the writing activities in “English for Palestine”.

1:8 Definitions of Terms

Activity: It is a general term to describe what learners are required to do, using the target language, at any one stage in the course of a lesson, and can include anything from exercises and drills to tasks and project work. It can involve any one of the four language skills. (Thornbury, 2006)

Exercise: It is an activity that involves the controlled manipulation of the forms of the language.

English for Palestine: The latest textbooks were used in the Palestinian public schools since the year 2000. This series includes Student’s Book, Workbook and teacher book.

Chapter Two

Theoretical Framework and Previous Studies

2:1 Introduction

2:2 Historical Backgrounds

2:2:1 Teaching writing for EFL learners

2:2:2 Teaching writing in L1

2:2:3 Differences between L1 and L2 writing skill

2:3 Types of writing activities

2:3:1 Controlled Writing

2:3:2 Free Writing

2:3:3 Translation

2:4 Previous Studies

2:5 Summary

Chapter Two

Theoretical Framework and Previous Studies

2:1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the related literature and a number of studies that concentrate on the writing skill. The researcher tried to limit the literature to studies that analyzes the writing activities and writing difficulties. Unfortunately, there is a lack of literature in this field especially locally, so the research was committed to find details related to the particular issue.

2:2 Historical Backgrounds

2:2:1 Teaching writing for EFL learners

The ability to write in English is becoming increasingly important in global communities as communication across language becomes ever more essential. Therefore, writing depends on our ability to form meaningful sentences, to arrange ideas in an effective order, and choose good words with correct spelling and grammar to address audiences appropriately.

Alza (2006) points that writing is as important as any other language skill. To account for the importance of writing in the scale of classroom practices, Nunan (1991) mentions the following benefits of writing:

1. Writing reinforces grammar, idioms, and vocabulary that we have been working with in class.
2. The effort to express ideas and the use of eye, hand, and brain is a unique way of reinforcing learning.
3. Students have the opportunity to be adventurous with the language, to take risks, and to go beyond what's been taught.
4. When writing, students become involved with the language, with themselves, and with their audience.

5. Writing and thinking are closely connected. The process of writing enables students to explore a topic fully.

6. Writing helps us to discover what we want to say. The writing process is creative. We sit down to write with a definite idea in mind, but as we write, new ideas develop.

Writing is an essential skill which assists students with other language skills as well. It helps you recognize how to form languages, and how to put ideas together. On the other hand, writing is related to the other language skills. For example, the students can read paragraphs and write answers to questions in reading comprehension activities since they need to gain new knowledge and build new vocabulary which leads to lifelong learning. Similarly, students can discuss and express their own ideas before writing them down; also they can listen and understand what others are saying before writing any activities down.

As represented in Raimes's taxonomy (1983) "the components of writing are likened to the spokes of a wheel, each representing the tasks that writers face as they produce a piece of writing. Raimes defined writing as the "clear, fluent, and effective communication of ideas" and presented the following nine components of writing: "syntax (e.g., sentence structure, sentence boundaries, and stylistic choices), grammar (e.g., rules for verbs, agreement, articles, and pronouns), mechanics (e.g., spelling and punctuation), word choice (e.g., vocabulary and idiom), and organization, content, the writer's process (e.g., getting ideas, getting started, writing drafts, and revising) audience, and purpose".

Similarly, Kalandadze (2007) points out that writing consists of the following stages: prewriting, drafting and revising. In the prewriting, a person needs to take time to think about the content and ideas that support the topic that he will write about. He also spends some time focusing and planning the piece of writing. In the drafting stage, one writes, keeps referring back to his notes, and concentrates on putting ideas down on paper, organizing information logically, and developing the topic with enough details for audience and purpose. In the revising stage, one makes the content clear for his – her audience, modifies and produces the final product.

2:2:2 Teaching writing in L1

Studies of literacy development show that children that are immersed in a print-rich environment from an early age, reading and writing skills will

develop naturally (Encyclopedia, 2001). Several researches support that writing language skills begins in early childhood (Brain wonders, 2003). Children gain significant knowledge of language, such as reading and writing, long before they enter school. Children learn to write through social literacy experiences as adults interact with them using different materials to improve their skills. According to Harste et al (1984) the organization of children's writing is socially based and they first appear as scribbles more than adult like-writing.

Students learn to read and write naturally. Sonia et al (2009) state that children use drawing, scribbles and random letters to represent meaning, or copying words from books, magazines, or from the exposure of the environment. They also state that writing can start as early as possible in the form of drawing.

Observational studies demonstrate that children's early writing development is accompanied with talking and playing (Ely, 2005). Anning (1999) proposes that children try to make sense of the world – drawing, modeling, role play, storytelling to convey their embedded messages. Ferreiro and Teberosky (1982) point out that children may initially regard writing and drawing as the direct symbol system in which meaning is embedded. Dyson (1988) suggests that children usually use their drawing and talking to support their early exploration and use of print. Therefore, as children write, they weave their drawing and speech into their writing to convey meanings (Gundlach, 1982).

In addition to speech and drawing, playing characterizes children's early writing development. McLane and McNamee (1990) believe that play allows children to develop and refine their capacities to use symbols, to represent experience, and to construct imaginary worlds, capacities they will draw on when they begin to write and read. As an orientation or approach to experience, play can make the various roles and activities of people who read and write more meaningful, hence more accessible to young children.

Bloodgood (1999) points that young children encounter most written words in their names, since this is often the word they first attempt to write. Villaume and Wilson (1989) contend that children's experience with names allows understanding of how literacy works. Ferreiro and Teberosky (1982) argue that learning to write one's name helps a child first attempt at creating meaning through print and using written language. When children become aware of the letters that they use to write their names, they will be able to use these letters in their writing.

Alza (2006) points that during elementary school years; children's writing will certainly undergo a number of changes. Bissex (1980) mentions that at this stage children may explore and experiment with different forms of writing that focus on mastery, competency, and control of writing. Children may repeatedly write familiar words or phrases or copy whole texts (Dyson and Freedman, 1991).

Kamberelis (1999) proposes that gradually, through exploration and experimentation, together with writing and reading experiences at home and at school, children elaborate and refine their early forms of writing and, consequently, new forms will begin to appear. As their forms of writing become varied, children will accordingly start to develop an awareness of the audience. Bissex (1980) points out that in their early writing; children tend to write for an immediate or specified audience, such as their parents, relatives, or friends. However, he adds, as new forms emerge from old forms, children will apply both old and new forms to achieve different purposes. Children's writing will develop gradually during school years; it will become more coherent and more complex. However, it is important to mention that teaching how to speak English adequately will not incite students to write. For learning to write is not just a natural experience. Children learned to speak their first language at home without systematic instructions, whereas most of students had to be taught in schools how to write, since writing language generally demands standard forms of grammar, syntax, and vocabulary. Therefore, teachers of English as a second language should be patient and wait for children's development to be mature and capable of forming meaningful sentences in learning foreign languages.

Writing enhances language acquisition as learners experiment with words, sentences to communicate their ideas effectively, and to reinforce the grammar and vocabulary they are learning in class. Therefore, it is worth mentioning that adult learners of English have many reasons to learn writing. They need to write for filling out forms, writing messages or e-mails. Others may need writing skills to succeed in academic studies or to apply for jobs. For many learners when they put their thoughts on paper, they share their ideas with others, since they often practice the language structures and vocabulary they are leaning in the classroom. Indeed, teaching adult learners isn't like teaching children.

On the other hand, writing is an important skill that provides us with a powerful means of communication with other people. To become an effective communicator, adult learners need to develop a wide range of writing skills. They need to be able to choose what to write, in order to produce the text and make opinions about their writing as to present it to their readers. So, writing

tasks differ according to the purposes of what you need and according to the audience for whom they are directed. Thus, writing tasks can vary from communicating with others (writing personal letters), writing informal reports, from persuasive written to demonstrate knowledge (tests), from fiction poems to commercial advertisements.

2:2:3 Differences between L1 and L2 writing skill

It is noticeable that a child learning to write in his native language differs from a child learning to write in a second language. For instance, the child who writes in his native language is evidently acquiring a number of words which are associated with the process of language development, whereas the child who writes in a second language will have a limited exposure to such an experience. That is, a child learning to write in a second language will practice his writing in the classroom which is largely restricted by the teacher and the limited time, while the child who writes in his native language will practice his writing in both formal (classroom) setting and informal (out of the classroom) setting.

Another difference that can be noticed between learning to write in a mother language and learning to write in a second language can be attributed to the interference of the mother tongue. EFL students accumulate the two languages but demonstrate difficulty in organizing phrases into appropriate, coherent structures. There appears a gap between the two languages. During my teaching, I found that when EFL students write in a second language, they tend to rely on their mother tongue structures to produce a correct passage, a relatively errors occur in the second language, thus indicating an interference of the mother tongue on the second language.

Textbook authors should therefore taken into consideration the needs of the learners when they design writing materials or when they teach writing.

There are many textbooks published to fulfill the need of English textbook. But we cannot know whether the textbook contain good materials or not, appropriate with the level of the students' needs or not. Therefore, related research must help teachers to see more clearly whether the activities and exercises task sequence across grades and units guarantee effective development skills throughout the textbooks to help students to become good writers.

2:3Types of writing activities:

Writing tasks can be classified into three main groups: (a) controlled writing (including guided writing), (b) translation, and (c) free writing. According to Raimes's (1983) study, for controlled writing and translation students need the following components of writing: syntax, grammar, mechanics, and word choice. By contrast, free writing requires all of Raimes's components of writing: syntax, grammar, mechanics, word choice, organization, content, the writer's process, audience, and purpose. Therefore, it is important for both teachers and students to integrate all components in the production of a text, as presented in Raimes's taxonomy.

2:3:1 Controlled Writing

Controlled writing is all the writing the students do for which a great deal of the content or form is supplied. It gives the students maximum practice in writing correct forms of the language; consequently, correcting is easy. Older studies such as Chitravelu , et al (1995) investigated the techniques of controlled writing and classified them into seven categories:

- Linked substitution tables
- Parallel writing
- Questions and answers
- Writing answers to guidance questions
- Sentence combining
- Sentence completion exercises
- Rearranging jumbled sentences

While Kitauchi (1985) investigated the techniques of controlled writing and classified them into five categories: (a) copying (e.g., dictation), (b) Substitution table/frame, (c) rewriting (e.g., conversion, substitution, sentence combining), (d) completion (e.g., fill-in the- blank, question-answer, sentence reordering), and (e) addition.

According to Bouchard and Spaventa (1980) when teachers use the controlled or guided writing translate it into number of activities: students copy sentences, make simple changes in verb tense, complete unfinished sentences, answer questions based on material they have read, and change the models the teacher provides in a variety of other ways.

White (1995) claims that controlled writing motivates students' attention on specific features of the written language. Students concentrate on grammar, vocabulary, and syntax in context. In addition, when students write the passages, they are using punctuation, connecting words, and spelling.

2:3:2 Free writing

Free writing is based on presumption, that everybody has the ability to say something. In addition to that, it is simply the practice of writing whatever comes into our minds. It can be associated with creative writing. According to Raimes (1983), if you want to write and put ideas together, you don't need to worry about grammar, spelling and organization.

Murcia (2001) suggests that the main idea of free writing is for students to write for a special period of time without taking their pen from the page. This technique works with EFL students if the teacher provides an opening clause or sentence to start with to structure the free writing.

Raimes (1983) proposes as soon as students develop their writing skills enough to be writing their own sentences instead of just following the pattern of given sentences, then they are ready to write a sequence of sentences. This sequence compromises free writing.

2:3:3 Translation

Translation means a way of communication, it helps learners to become more independent and better equipped when using foreign language. Koppe (2011) points that translation can bring many benefits for both teachers as well as learners, such as:

- Translation provides learners with the practice and skills necessary to communicate accurately, meaningfully and appropriately.
- Through translation activities, teachers can promote interaction among learners since they involve the negotiation of multiple possibilities of form and meaning.
- Translation can help learners to interpret, negotiate and express meaning from different perspectives, according to the context and its

different interpretive communities.

- The practice of translation encourages the reflection on language usage and the exchange of different points of view, raising language awareness.

Duff (1996) states that translation develops three qualities essential to all language learning; accuracy, clarity and flexibility. It trains the learner to search (flexibility) for the most appropriate words (accuracy) to convey what is meant (clarity).

Thus, the value of translation in the foreign language classroom is an opportunity for students to discuss and negotiate the meaning and the form of a text. Translation also involves language transformation and production, since there is not one single, perfect end-product of it, but several possibilities of output depending on the audience, context, time, i.e. on the interpretative community. (Koppe, 2011)

2:4 Previous Studies

Introduction

The focus of this review of literature about writing skill activities and exercises are on different types of studies:

1. Studies that investigate lower primary stage (1-4).
2. Studies that investigate Upper primary stage (5-10).
3. Studies that investigate Secondary stage (11-12).
4. Studies that investigate University level.

Studies that investigate lower primary stage (1-4).

Al-Azza (2006) conducted an analytical study of the writing activities in “Action Pack” textbooks (1-6) in Jordan. The study aimed at identifying the types of writing activities that are used in Action Pack textbooks (1-6) and all other related materials. The sample of the study consisted of all Action Pack textbooks (1-6) that are used in the Jordanian schools and all other related materials. The data of this study were collected through a special writing activity checklist. The results of the study revealed that most writing activities are located in the Activity Books. There are some writing activities on the CDs, but there are no writing activities at all in the other materials. Results also showed that the writing activities and the general and specific writing outcomes (1-6) are not properly aligned. They also showed that there was little integration of writing with other language skills such as listening, speaking and reading.

Kaufman and Wieneck (1995) carried out a study that examined children's writing development in two kindergarten classrooms during the course of a school year, with particular consideration to context, teacher-provided support, and characterization of students' writing. The study revealed writing as play and exploration. The Subjects were 8 children in a morning kindergarten class and 9 children in an afternoon class. Findings related to classroom context suggest: primary teacher support was a post-writing strategy utilizing students' zones of proximal development; teachers made little intervention to improve student's writing quality through modeled or shared writing; very little group interaction or writing audience was observed; and journal writing was the second most frequent literacy event

after reading aloud. Regarding children's writings, findings suggest: some children made modest growth while others made little or no growth; large variations in writing fluency were present; topics came from students' own life or school experiences; drawing was a predominant feature of all writings; children developed an early repertoire of correctly-spelled conventional words.

Caldwell and Moore (1991) conducted a study in which they compared drawing, as a planning activity for writing, with discussion, as a traditional planning activity, to determine the effects of each upon the quality of narrative writing. The samples were 42 second and third grade students, randomly assigned to two groups; the drawing group and the control group. The drawing group and control groups participated in 15 weekly sessions consisting of a 15- minute producing a first writing draft. Students' writing drafts were analyzed for the effects of drawing and discussion planning activities on writing. Repeated measures ANOVA revealed that writing quality of the drawing group was significantly higher than that of the control group. It was concluded that drawing is a viable and effective form of rehearsal for narrative writing at the second-and-third-grade levels and can be more successful than the traditional planning activity.

Studies that investigate Upper primary stage (5-10).

Peterson (1995) carried out a study which analyzed primary children's writing to show that children go through writing stages while learning to write. Understanding these stages can help children become more effective writers in expressing feelings, memories, and concerns to gain recognition with themselves and others. The results clearly show that most children do go through stages in their writing. Not all children go through stages at the same time and some children may even skip a stage, but children's writings nevertheless show what stage of writing they are in for that piece of writing. Also, the stages of writing are not always labeled the same from researcher to researcher but a correspondence between the stages they identify is nevertheless evident. The study also shows that invented spelling is important for children because it allows them to take risks and write without fear of making mistakes.

Studies that investigate Secondary stage (11-12)

Kobayakawa (2011) carried a quantitative comparative analysis of writing tasks in English I, II, and Writing high textbooks. Writing tasks in the textbooks were classified into four categories: controlled writing, guided writing, translation, and free writing; and 14 subcategories. The results of the analysis show that both English I and II textbooks featured mostly controlled writing tasks and fill-in-the-blank with translation tasks, while Writing textbooks included various translation and controlled writing tasks. Overall, guided writing and free writing tasks rarely appeared in the textbooks analyzed. These findings suggest that teachers need to support the development of practical communication abilities by proactively increasing the free writing activities in English classes.

Borraaka (2010) carried out a study to investigate the writing errors made by Palestinian EFL learners in Jericho public schools, Palestine. It also examined the effects of gender; the years of learning and teaching English and the kinds of errors that were made by Palestinians students in the twelfth grades classes in Jericho city. The sample of the study consisted of 219 students; 86 males and 133 females. The researcher prepared a written exam which consisted of three choices. The researcher recommended to develop the English teaching strategies as foreign language strategies, develop the listening skills of EFL students and stop the use of Arabic language in classrooms since the main cause of committing errors in English writing is due to the effect of the native language on learners.

Darus (2009) conducted a study which aims at examining errors in a corpus of 72 essays written by 72 participants. The participants are from four Malay students who are studying at a secondary school in Malaysia; 37 male and 35 female. They have experienced approximately the same number of years of education through primary and secondary education in Malaysia. The instrument used for this study was participants' written essays and Mark in software. All of the errors in the essays were identified and classified into various categorizations. The results of the study show that six most common errors committed by the participants were singular/plural form, verb tense, word choice, preposition, subject-verb agreement and word order. This study has shed light on the manner in which students internalize the rules of the target language, which is English. Such an insight into language learning problems is useful to teachers because it provides information on common trouble-spots in language learning which can be used in the preparation of effective teaching materials.

Hazmi (2006) conducted a study to promote the skills of critical thinking and self-reflection, since it is that very area of self-expression where ideas can be reviewed, reflected on and refined. The participants were nineteen Saudi EFL university students' reflections on writing in Arabic and English in a composition classroom at King Khalid University. Data were elicited via an open ended questionnaire emphasizing that this was to be a self reflection on how the participating subjects normally write in Arabic and English. The study revealed positive results with regard to promoting students' critical reflection in the service of EFL writing. Other positive indications included making a writing class a personal process, that is, a continual critical reflection on the problems posed by the EFL context; a search for meaning; a process of acknowledging students' need to be understood; and a protocol of communicating perceptions.

Adra (2005) conducted a study to investigate the syntactic errors in the written compositions of the 11th grade students at Southern Hebron Directorate, Palestine. The population of the study consisted of 153 students studying at four different schools; two schools were for girls and the other two for boys. The subjects were asked to sit for two tests in two separate sessions. After the data were collected, the following statistical tests were performed on the data: frequencies percentages, standard deviation, T-test, and Pearson correlation. The findings of the study showed that there were no significant differences between male and female students with respect to syntactic errors taken together.

Kodituwakku (2001) conducted a study that aimed to identify metacognitive strategies used by secondary school children in the three stages of writing process in the Sinhala Language, 408 observation notes, written exercises from 278 mother tongue lessons, 289 interviews and responses to a questionnaire were collected from 678 Grade 6-10 students. Analyzed qualitative and quantitative data showed the dominance of writing stage in the writing process of grades 6-10 students of both sexes in rural / urban schools. The results showed that students didn't show an awareness or regulation of meta cognitive strategies on planning writing.

Newell (1984) carried out a study to examine how school writing tasks (note taking, answering study questions, and essay writing) interact with three measures of learning (recall, concept application, and gain in passage-specific knowledge). During a series of six sessions, the sample was eight students from eleventh grade read prose passages, completed the writing tasks, and responded to the three measures of learning. A coding scheme for analyzing composing aloud protocols was developed to investigate how the three

writing tasks affected writing and learning operations. Results indicated significant gains in passage-specific knowledge for essay writing. Differing profiles of writing process scores for the three writing tasks indicated that with note taking and answering study questions information in the prose passages remained isolated and detached. Essay writing enabled the students to integrate elements of the prose passages into their knowledge of the topic.

Studies that investigate University level.

Tahaineh (2010) carried out an analysis study of compositions written by Jordanian first-, second-and third year university EFL students. The aim of this study to find out the kinds of errors they make in the use of prepositions. Data was derived from free compositions written by a stratified random sample of 162 students with similar linguistic, socio cultural and educational backgrounds. The sample of the study was given 4 topics and wrote their compositions within 50-minute class session. The research findings reveal that EFL Arab Jordanian students at the tertiary level experience serious difficulties in using the correct prepositions in their writing. The majority of errors made by the three groups are the result of the learners' mother tongue interference.

Ahmed (2010) carried out a study which aimed at exploring Egyptian students' essay writing difficulties. The participants of the current study were 165 Egyptian student teachers of English who were randomly selected from third and fourth year students at the Faculty of Education, Helwan University. The current instruments of the study were mixed methods; namely, questionnaires, in-depth semi-structured interviews and semi-structured classroom observation. Findings of the study suggest that Egyptian different contexts are forceful dimensions in students' realizations and reproductions of their writings; an indication of writing challenges that Egyptian students' encounter. Findings of the study revealed that Egyptian students encounter various writing difficulties in planning, coherence, cohesion, style, unity, mechanics and revision. Findings of the current study indicated two socio-political challenges: namely, suppression of students' voice in writing and the lack of accountability. Moreover, some socio-cultural challenges have influenced students' writing development such as students' previous learning experiences, lack of reading habit, and L1 interference in L2.

Abdel Latif (2007) conducted a study to identify the factors that account for the Egyptian English majors' negative writing effects, i.e. their high English writing apprehension and low English writing self-efficacy. The participants in this study were from the fourth year English Department students at the

Faculty of Education, Al-Azhar University in Egypt. The total number of the subjects who took part in the study was 67 students. The subjects were administered two scales measuring their writing apprehension and writing self-efficacy, and then those students with scores falling into the extremes of the two scales were interviewed about their writing experience and background. To supplement the qualitative data obtained from the interviews, the subjects' scores on three linguistic tests used for measuring their English grammar and vocabulary knowledge were compared to their scores on the two scales. Analyzing both types of data showed that there are six causes of the subjects' high English writing apprehension and four causes of their low English writing self-efficacy. Based on the results reached, the study presents some recommendations for writing instruction and suggestions for further research.

Torrance ,et al (2000) conducted a study which aimed at analyzing questionnaire responses describing the writing processes associated with a total of 715 essays (term papers) produced by undergraduate psychology students identified four distinct patterns o f writing behavior: a minimal-drafting strategy which typically involved the production of one or at most two drafts; an outline-and-develop strategy which entailed content development both prior to and during drafting; a detailed-planning strategy which involved the use of content-development methods (mind mapping, brainstorming or rough drafting) in addition to outlining, and a "think-then-do" strategy which, unlike the other three strategies, did not involve the production of a written outline. The researchers analyzed the writing strategies for a subset of these essays produced by a cohort of 48 students followed through the three years of their degree course. They found some evidence of within-student consistency in strategy use with on average two out of every three of a student's essays being written using the same type of strategy. There was no evidence of systematic change in writing strategy from year to year.

Sasaki, Hirose (1996) conducted a study to investigate factors that might influence Japanese university students' expository writing in English. The participants of the study were 70 students of low- to high-intermediate English proficiency along a variety of dimensions, namely, second language (L2) proficiency, first language (L 1) writing ability, writing strategies in L1 and L2, meta knowledge of L2 expository writing, past writing experiences, and instructional background. Quantitative analysis revealed that (a) students' L2proficiency, L1 writing ability, and meta knowledge were all significant in explaining the L2 writing ability variance; (b) among these 3 independent

variables, L2 proficiency explained the largest portion (52%) of the L2 writing ability variance, L1 writing ability the second largest (18%), and meta knowledge the smallest (11%) and (c) there were significant correlations among these independent variables. Qualitative analysis indicated that good writers were significantly different from weak writers in those good writers. There was no significant difference between good and weak writers for other writing strategies and experiences.

2:5 Summary

In conclusion, it is important to note that most of the studies focused on the errors and difficulties which face students during writing compositions. There was no serious trend, however, to investigate the development of the writing skill through series of textbooks or to trace the types of writing activities that are used in the series. Accordingly, the researcher decides to conduct a study which investigates the development of writing skill activities and exercises in the Palestinian curricula that are used in the Palestinian government schools. She hopes that her research will add new insights to the previous studies and new ones for the following reasons:

- A) Firstly, the present study will attempt to investigate a more specific area, which hasn't been studied in the former studies which is “Analyzing of the writing skill exercises and activities in “English for Palestine” from grade one to twelve.
- B) Secondly, the present study will investigate the suitability of the writing skill by analyzing activities and exercises in the Palestinian English textbooks.
- C) Thirdly, the present study will deal with English teachers' opinions about the suitability of the writing skill activities and exercises in the curricula.
- D) The study will use the instruments of activity checklist, the questionnaire and an interview to collect information.

Chapter Three

Methodology and Procedures

3:1 Introduction

3:2 The Design of the study

3:3 Population of the Study

3:4 Sample of the Study

3:4:1 Instrumentations

3:4:2 The Validity of the Instruments

3:4:3 The Reliability of the Instruments

3:5 The Study Procedures

3:6 Variables of the Study

3:7 Statistical Analyses

Chapter three

Methodology and Procedures

3:1 Introduction

The purpose of the present descriptive analytic study is to analyze the activities and exercises in the content of *English for Palestine*. This chapter describes how the research is conducted, the instrumentation used, how the data are collected, recorded and analyzed and how validity and reliability of the data are assured. The researcher clarified the validity and reliability of the content analysis as well as the analysis process and how it is conducted.

3:2 The Design of the study

A descriptive analytical method was used to carry out the study. The researcher conducted this method due to its relevance and suitability for analyzing the activities and exercises in *English for Palestine* from grades one to twelve. This helps with dealing with the different aspects of collecting and describing data on the correspondence of the content of *English for Palestine*. It also serves the process of analyzing these data in accordance with the numeric data collected through the analysis of the activities and exercises. In addition, the researcher has built a questionnaire and conducted an interview with some English teachers and one supervisor. Also, the study aimed to investigate whether there were any significant statistical differences at the level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in the degree of mastering writing skill by English teachers differ according to the gender, teacher's qualification, years of experience and grades taught. For this purpose, (93) English teachers were selected to answer the questionnaire,(33)males and (60)females

3:3 Population and the sample of the study

The population consisted of the English textbooks in the Palestinian curriculum. These included Students' books and Workbooks. In addition, the population of the study consisted of (226) English teachers in Bethlehem in the scholastic year (2011-2012). The population consisted of (79) males and (147) females. Furthermore, to ensure the validity of the study, the researcher

chose randomly 11 teachers and one supervisor to answer questions which were prepared by the researcher.

Table (3.1): The Distribution of the population due to gender

Gender	Number	Percentage
Male	79	34.95
Female	147	65.05
Total	226	100

Table (3.1) shows that the percentage of males is (34.95) of the population and the percentage of females is (65.05).

3:4 Sample of the study

The sample of this study consisted of (40%) of the population. It was chosen as a stratified sample that aimed to cover the whole population of the study in a just way.

Table (3.2): The Distribution of the sample due to (gender, qualification, years of experience, grades taught)

Valid		Frequency	Percent
Gender variable	Male	33	35.5
	Female	60	64.5
	Total	93	100
Qualification variables	Diploma	6	6.5
	B.A	73	78.5
	B.A(ed)	4	4.3
	M.A(ed)	2	2.2
	M.A	8	8.6
	Total	93	100
Years of experience			
	Less than 5 years	9	9.7
	5-10 years	27	29

	More than 10 years	57	61.3
	Total	93	100
Grades taught	1-4	24	25.8
	5-10	34	36.6
	11-12	35	33.6
	Total	93	100

3:4:1 Instruments

The researcher believes that the most suitable tools for achieving the purposes of the study is conducting a writing activity checklist, an interview and a questionnaire which includes (21 items) for collecting, describing and analyzing data. The questionnaire was developed by the researcher benefiting from the previous literature (Dweikat, 2011 and Aqel , 2009) , (See appendix 1). However, the writing activities checklist was prepared to analyze the exercises and activities in English textbooks after reviewing the relevant literature and theoretical framework used for analyzing writing skill, (see appendix 2). Furthermore, an interview was conducted with some teachers from Bethlehem and Jerusalem Districts and one supervisor (see appendix 4).

- **The questionnaire**

The questionnaire was designed by the researcher benefiting from previous literature (Dweikat, 2001, and Aqel, (2009), to measure the progression of writing activities and exercises in *English for Palestine* after reviewing the relevant literature. It includes 21 paragraphs for the teachers to answer. It is ranging from “strongly agree” (5) to “disagree” (1) followed Lickert 5 point scale. See appendix (1).

- **Interviews**

In addition to the questionnaire, the researcher decided to conduct an interview to ensure the study results. Furthermore, interview is one of the most widely used methods for obtaining qualitative data. Eleven teachers and one supervisor were chosen to be interviewed. Eleven teachers and one

supervisor were chosen randomly to answer the interview questions. During this interview the researcher wrote down the answers and asked questions in English about the main ideas from the writing activity checklist.

- **The writing activity checklist**

The writing activity checklist was adopted by Alazza (2006), but some items were added to suit the study such as (controlled writing, guided writing and free writing). (See appendix 2,)

3:4:2 The Validity of the Instruments

To ensure content validity of the questionnaire, they were submitted to eleven EFL experts. Those opinions, recommendations, or suggested modifications were highly appreciated and taken into consideration. Some items were modified; others were added or deleted (see Appendix 5).

3:4:3 The Reliability of the Instruments:

-To measure the reliability of the questionnaire, the researcher applied Cronbach Alpha formula. Cronbach Alpha coefficient was (0.898).

-To measure the interpersonal reliability of the interview, the researcher recorded the participant's answers and asked someone else to record their answers too. Then she compared her record with the other teacher's record to see the agreement points in the participant's answers. Their recording was almost the same. Then she wrote down the participant's answers on the interview results, and wrote down the cross points between its results, and the writing activity checklist.

-To measure the intra – reliability of the analysts

The researcher analyzed all units from grade one to twelve in *English for Palestine* twice, with a two-week time between the first and second analysis. The results of the first and second analysis were compared for consistency.

The results of this comparison showed more than an 85 % match between the two analyses.

-To measure the inter-reliability of the analysts

To accomplish the inter -reliability of the analysis. The researcher gave the same sample units to three EFL teachers and asked them to analyze the writing activities in these units using the same writing activity checklist. The results of this analysis showed more than an 80% match.

3:5 The study procedures

The research used the following procedures during the application of the study:

- 1) Establishing the validity and reliability of the instruments by the experts who approved the utility of the instrument for carrying out the study, the research incorporated the changes suggested by the experts.
- 2) The researcher obtained the number of the population of English teachers who are (226), (79) males and (147) females. According to the interviewee, the researcher randomly chose eleven teachers who taught different levels and one supervisor.
- 3) After drawing the sample, that consisted of (40 %) of the population of the study, the researcher obtained a permit from the Ministry of Education and arranged with school principals to enter schools with the purpose of distributing and collecting the questionnaires again. This further allowed the researcher to ask teachers questions relevant to the study.
- 4) The researcher herself distributed the copies of the instrument on the target teachers of the sample in each school.
- 5) The researcher managed to collect almost (93) of the copies of the questionnaire which were distributed to the target teachers while seven of them were cancelled. Then, the questionnaire data were statistically processed and analyzed.
- 6) Both intra and inter validity of analysis were established before final analysis was conducted.

3:6 Variables of the study

- The independent variables of this study are:

1. Gender (male and female).
2. Teacher's qualification (Diploma-Bachelor-Master degree or higher).
3. Teaching experience (Less than 5years-5-10-more than10years).
4. Grades taught: (1-4—5-10—11-12).

- The dependent variable of this study is:

- The teachers' opinions of writing skill activities and exercises.

3:7 Statistical Analyses

The writing activities in all *English for Palestine* textbooks (1-12) were identified, coded, and classified. This classification included writing types, such as: copying; dictation; sentence completion; paragraph writing, reordering sentences, punctuation, sentence writing, and letter completion. Frequency tables, total numbers and corresponding percentages were used.

For the questionnaire, the frequencies and percentages were calculated for statistical analyses and means and standard deviations, T-Test and One Way ANOVA were used as they suitable for the study.

Chapter Four

Results of the study

4: 1Introduction

4:2:1 Results of the First Question

4:2:1:1 Results of the First Null Hypothesis

4:2:1:2 Results of the Second Null Hypothesis

4:2:1:3 Results of the Third Null Hypothesis

4:2:1:4 Results of the Fourth Null Hypothesis

4:2:2 Results of the Second Question

4:2:3 Results of the Third Question

4:3 Major Findings

4:4 Comparisons of Results

Chapter Four

Results of the Study

4:1 Introduction

The purpose of the study was to analyze the writing activities and exercises in the student and workbooks in “*English for Palestine*” in the public schools. The researcher reports the results of the study using tables, which show the types of writing activities in each textbook (1-12) and the number and the percentage of each of these types.

4:2:1 Results of the First Question:

What are the types of writing activities included in the Palestinian curricula?

To answer the first question, the researcher analyzed all the writing activities and exercises in all the Students Books and Workbooks (1-12).

Table: (4.1): Types of writing activities and exercises in the students' books and workbooks from grades (1-12)

Grade	Type of writing activity	No. of writing activities	Type of writing activity	Percentage	Total of activities per grade
First	Mechanical Copying 1-Tracing 2-Circling 3-Matching 4-Dictation	61 WB	Controlled writing	42 %	146 – WB
		20 WB		14 %	
		38WB		26 %	
		27WB		18 %	
Second	Mechanical Copying 1-Handwriting 2-Matching 3-Sentence completion 4-Letters writing	49WB	Controlled writing	26 %	188 – WB
		21 WB		11 %	
		47 WB		25 %	
		71 WB		38 %	
Third	Dialogue completion	12 WB	Controlled writing	11 %	110 – WB 9 – SB
	Letter completion	3 WB		3%	
	Sentence completion	69 WB		63%	
		6 SB		67%	
	Meaningful copying	13WB		12%	

	Dictation	9 WB		8%	
	Rearranging sentences to make a paragraph	2 WB		1.8%	
	Rearranging sentences to make a letter	2 SB		22%	
Fourth	Writing a recipe	1 WB	Free writing	0.9%	133 – WB
		1 SB		11%	
		1 WB		0.9%	
Fifth	Handwriting	37 WB	Controlled writing	28%	42 – WB 52 – SB
	Dialogue completion	26 WB		20%	
	Sentence completion	57 WB		43%	
	Rearranging letters to make words	1 WB		0.7%	
	Writing a letter	4 WB		3%	
	Rearranging words to make meaningful sentences	3 WB		2%	
	Writing a shopping list	2 WB	Free writing	1.5%	
	Writing a project about (family – friends)	3 WB		2%	
Sixth	Sentence completion	22 WB	Controlled writing	52%	35 – WB 40 – SB
		7 SB		14%	
	Completing a table	1 WB		2%	
		2 SB		4%	
	Dictation	6 SB		12%	
	Punctuation	5 WB		12%	
		6 SB		12%	
	Rearranging alphabetically	8 WB		19%	
		6 SB		12%	
	Rearranging sentences to make a paragraph	6 SB		12%	
	Rearranging words to make a sentence	6 SB		12%	
	Sentence writing (using connectors)	4 WB		10%	
	Writing a postcard	2 WB	Free writing	5%	
		1 WB		2%	
	Sentence writing	12 WB		23%	

	Sentence writing (using connectors)	2 WB	Free writing	6%	24 – WB 34 – SB
	Rearranging alphabetically	2 WB		6%	
		1 SB		3%	
	Rearranging words to make a sentence	4 SB		10%	
	Dictation	6 SB		15%	
	Sentence Writing	8 SB		20%	
	Writing a recipe	1 WB		3%	
	Writing a postcard	2 WB		6%	
Seventh	Punctuation	2 WB		8%	
		7 SB		21%	
	Sentence completion	4 WB		17%	
		7 SB		21%	
	Sentence writing	12 WB		50%	
	Rearranging sentences to make a paragraph	1 WB		4%	
		3 SB		9%	
	Adding the correct suffix	4 WB		17%	
	Dictation	6 SB		18%	
	Completing a table	1 WB		4%	
		2 SB		6%	
Eighth	Writing a letter	5 SB	Free writing	15%	54 – WB 30 – SB
	Writing a paragraph	4 SB		12%	
	Sentence completion	6 WB	Controlled writing	11%	
		6 SB		20%	
	Writing a summary	2 WB		4%	
	Punctuation	5 WB		9%	
		1 SB		3%	
	Rearranging sentences to make a paragraph	1 WB		2%	
		3 SB		10%	
	Dictation	15 WB		28%	
	Writing a paragraph	8 WB	Free writing	15%	
		8 SB		27%	
	Writing an e-mail	3 WB		6%	
		2 SB		7%	
	Writing a dialogue	1 WB		2%	
	Writing a diary	3 WB		6%	
		1 SB		3%	
	Writing a letter	5 WB		9%	
		3 SB		10%	
	Writing a report	1 SB		3%	
	Writing a story	4 WB		7%	
		4 SB		13%	
	Writing a descriptive event	1 WB		2%	
	Sentence Writing	1 SB		3%	

Ninth	Dictation	16 WB	Controlled writing	34%	47 – WB
	Writing a dialogue	2 WB		4%	
	Punctuation	2 WB		4%	
	Rearrange sentences to make a paragraph	1 WB		2%	
	Paragraph completion	5WB		11%	
	Writing (story- reply-report-letter- postcard)	21WB	Free writing	45%	
Tenth	Punctuation	7 WB	Controlled writing	24%	29 – SB
	Paragraph completion	4 WB		14%	
	Completing a table	2 WB		7%	
	Questions and answers completion	1 WB		3%	
	Writing a story	2 WB		7%	
	Writing a report	3 WB	Free writing	10%	
	Writing an interview	1 WB		3%	
	Writing a reply	1 WB		3%	
	Writing a paragraph	4 WB		14%	
	Writing a letter	4 WB		14%	
Eleventh	Punctuation	2 WB	Controlled writing	7%	29 – SB
	Rearranging sentences to make a paragraph	4 WB		14%	
	Paragraph completion	6 WB		21%	
	Writing a letter	4 WB	Free writing	14%	
	Writing an encyclopedia entry	1 WB		3%	
	Writing a report	2 WB		7%	
	Writing an e-mail	2 WB		7%	
	Writing an essay	1 WB		3%	
	Writing a diary	1 WB		3%	
	Writing a story	1 WB		3%	
	Writing a paragraph	5 WB		17%	
Twelfth	Guided questions and answers	1 WB	Controlled writing	4%	27 – SB
	Paragraph completion	1 WB		4%	
	Sentence completion	1 WB		4%	
	Rearranging sentences to make a paragraph	5 WB		19%	
	Writing a postcard	1 WB	Free writing	4%	
	Writing a letter	3 WB		11%	
	Writing a newspaper report	3 WB		11%	
	Writing an essay	5 WB		19%	
	Writing a descriptive story	3 WB		11%	
	Writing a paragraph	4 WB		15%	

Table (4.1) showed the total activities for Student Books for all grades reached 250 and SB assigned for them. It also showed the total activities for Work Books for all grades reached 679 and the code WB assigned for them. The code SB put beside each activity done by the grade of Student Book.

The following chart shows there is one type of writing (mechanical copying) which is classified into tracing, circling, matching, and dictation in the first grade work book. This type of activity occurred 146 times in the first grade work book, which represented 22% of the total number of writing activities in the work books (1-9).

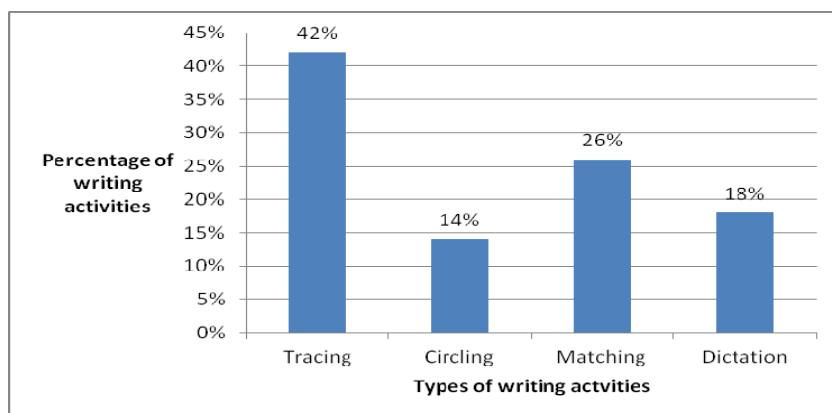


Fig. (4.1): Writing activities and exercises in the First grade workbook.

In the second grade work book four types of writing activities are used. These types are repeated 188 times; representing 28% of the total number of writing activities in the work books (1-9). Letter writing is used 71 times and represented 83% of the total number of letters writing activities in the work books (1-9) and 38% of the total number of the writing activities used in the second grade work book. Sentence completion occurred 47 times and represented 21% of the total number of sentence completion activities in the work books (1-9), and 25% of the total number of the writing activities used in the second grade work book.

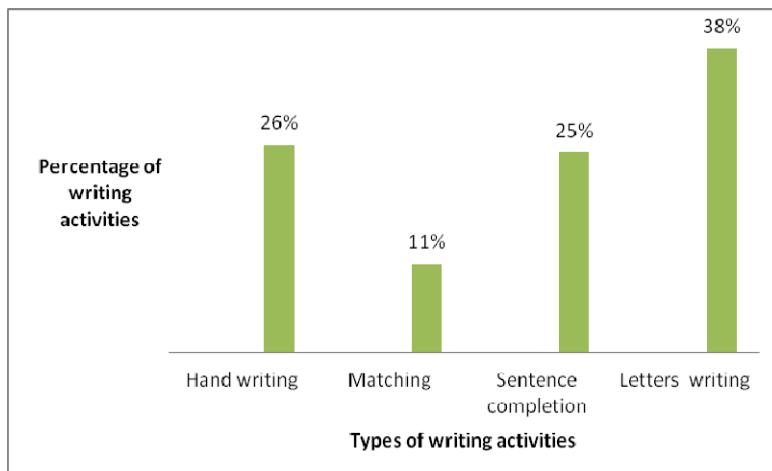


Fig. (4.2): Writing activities and exercises in the Second grade workbook

In the third grade work book, new types of activities are used for the first time but three of them are used in small numbers. Writing a recipe, for example, is used only once, it represented 50% of the total number of writing recipe activities that are used in the work books (1-9), and 1% of the total number of writing activities that are used in the third grade work book. On the other hand, rearranging sentences to make a paragraph is used only twice and represented 40% of the total numbers of rearranging sentences to make a paragraph activity that are used in the work books (1-9) , and 1,8% of the total number of writing activities used in the third grade work book . Whereas, writing an invitation a new type of writing activity in this grade, which is only used once, and represented 100% of the total number of writing an invitation activities that are used in the work books (1-9); and 0.9% of the total number of writing activities used in third grade work book. All the rest of the types of writing activities in the third grade are only a repetition of all types that are used in the earlier grades. These types included letter completion which is used 3 times and represented 33% of the total number of sentences completion activities in the work books (1-9).

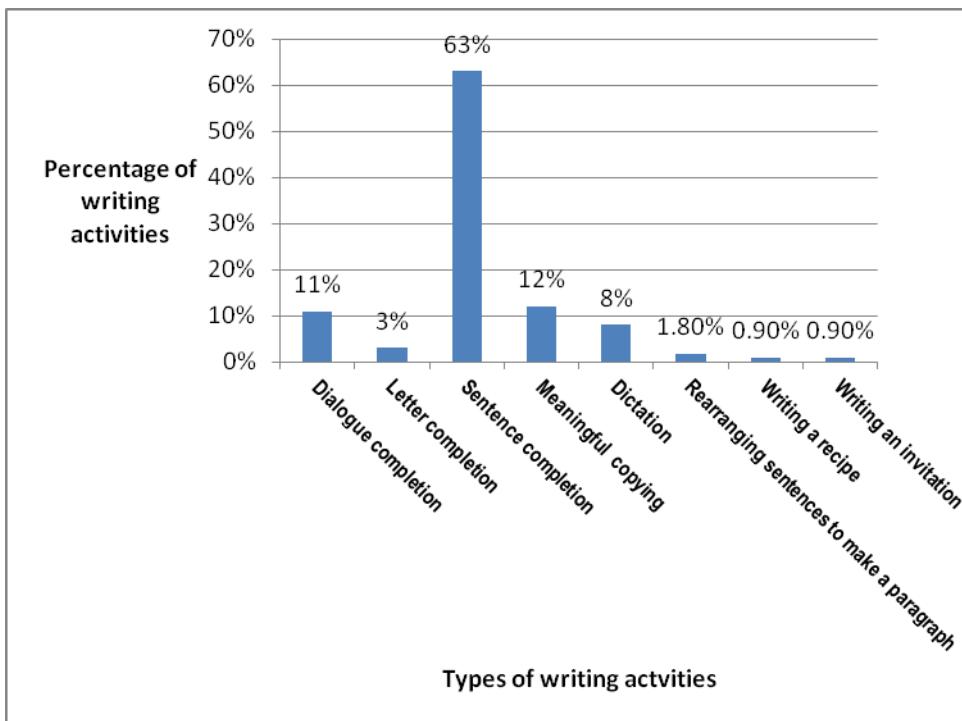


Fig. (4.3): Writing activities and exercises in the Third grade workbook.

Writing a project is a new type of writing activities which is only used three times in the fourth grade workbook, representing 100% of the total number of writing a project activity in the work books (1-9), and 2% of the total number of writing activities which used in the fourth grade workbook. On the other hand, rearranging letters to make words is only used once in the fourth grade workbook, which represented 100% of the total number of rearranging letters activities in the workbooks (1-9), and 0.75% of the total number of writing activities used in the fourth grade workbook. Rearranging words to make meaningful sentences is used three times, and represented 43% of the total number of the writing activities, while handwriting is used 37 times and represented 43% of the total number of writing activities used in the work books (1-9). Letter writing is repetition of the types that is used in the earlier series, representing 5% of the total number of writing activities in the work books (1-9), and writing a shopping list is used twice in the fourth grade workbook and represented 1, 5% of the total number of writing activities in the fourth grade workbook which represented 100% of the total number of writing activities in the work books (1-9). While dialogue completion and sentence completion is used 26 times, and the second one is used 57 times in

the fourth grade workbook. These types of writing activities represented 20% and 43% of the total number of writing activities in the work books (1-9).

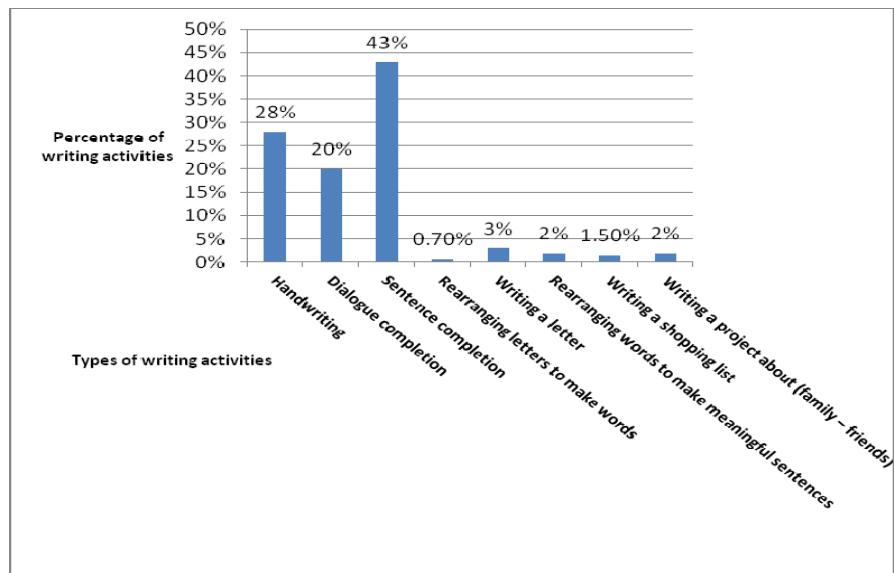


Fig. (4.4): Writing activities and exercises in the Fourth grade workbook

Punctuation is a new type of writing in fifth grade. It represented 26% of the total number of punctuation activities used in the workbooks (1-9) and 12% of the total number of writing activities used in the fifth grade workbook. Rearranging alphabetically is used eight times and represented 80 % of the total number of this activity in the workbooks (1-9), and 19% of the total number of writing activities used in the fifth grade workbook. Writing a post card is used twice and represented 22% of the total number of writing activities in the workbooks (1-9), and represented 5% of the total number of writing activities used in this grade level. Completing a table is only used once and represented 50 % of the total number of completing a table writing activities in the workbooks (1-9), and represented 2% of the total number of writing activities used in the fifth grade workbook. Sentence writing is used four times and represented 22% of the total number of sentence writing activities in the workbooks (1-9), and represented 6% of the total number of writing activities used in the fifth grade workbook. All the other types of writing activities are a repetition of the previous grades.

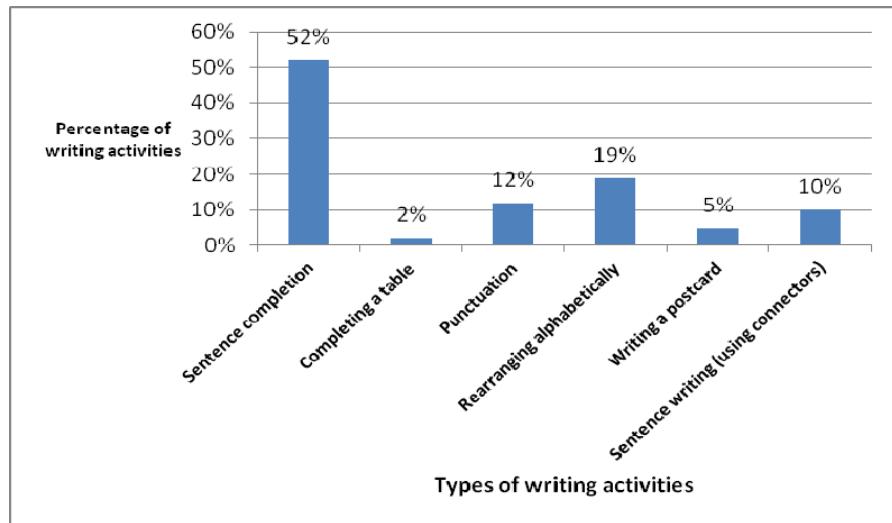


Fig. (4.5): Writing activities and exercises in the Fifth grade workbook.

While the number of the types of writing activities that is used in the sixth grade workbook is the same as that of grade Fifth. Four other activities are added in this grade. Spelling as a new type of writing activities is used three times and represented 100% of the total number of spelling activities in the workbooks (1-9), and represented 9% of the total number of writing activities in the sixth grade workbook. The remaining types of writing activities in the sixth grade workbook are only a repetition of the previous activities.

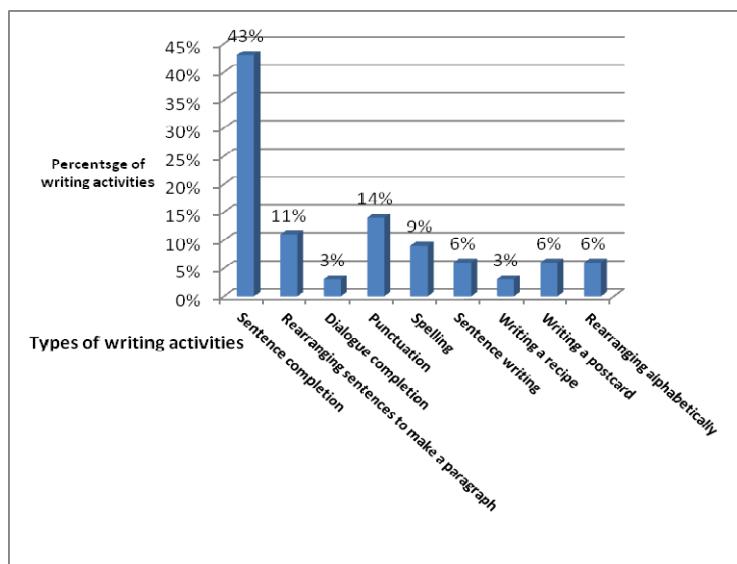
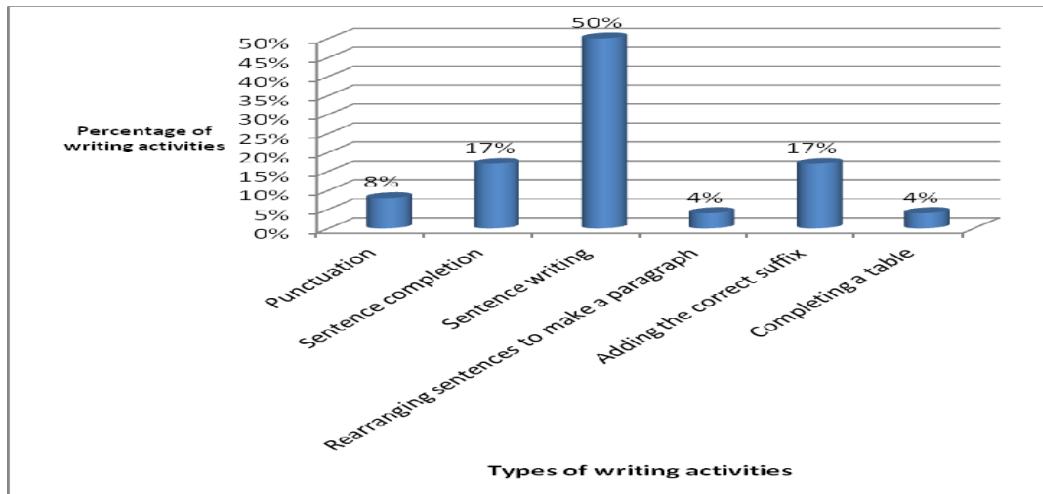


Fig. (4.6): Writing activities and exercises in the Sixth grade workbook.

In the seventh grade workbook, the writing activities are only a continuous of the earliest series. However, adding the correct suffix is a new type of writing activities and represented 100% of the total number of writing activities used in the seventh grade workbook.



Fig(4.7): Writing activities and exercises in the Seventh grade workbook.

In the eighth grade workbook, the writing activities are sorted and the types of writing are included twelve. These twelve types of writing are practiced through fifty-four writing activities, which represented 8% of the total number of writing activities used in the workbooks (1-9).See (Appendix Two) .It shows that six new types of writing are used in the eighth grade workbook. The first new type is writing a paragraph which is used 8 times and represented 15% of the total number of writing activities used in Workbook Eighth grade. Writing an e-mail is used three times and represented 6% of the total number of writing activities in the eighth grade workbook. Writing a summary, as well, is used twice and represented 4% of the total number of writing activities in the eighth grade workbook. Writing a story is used four times and represented 7% of the total number of writing activities in this grade. The other remaining activities are only a repetition from grade One to grade Eight.

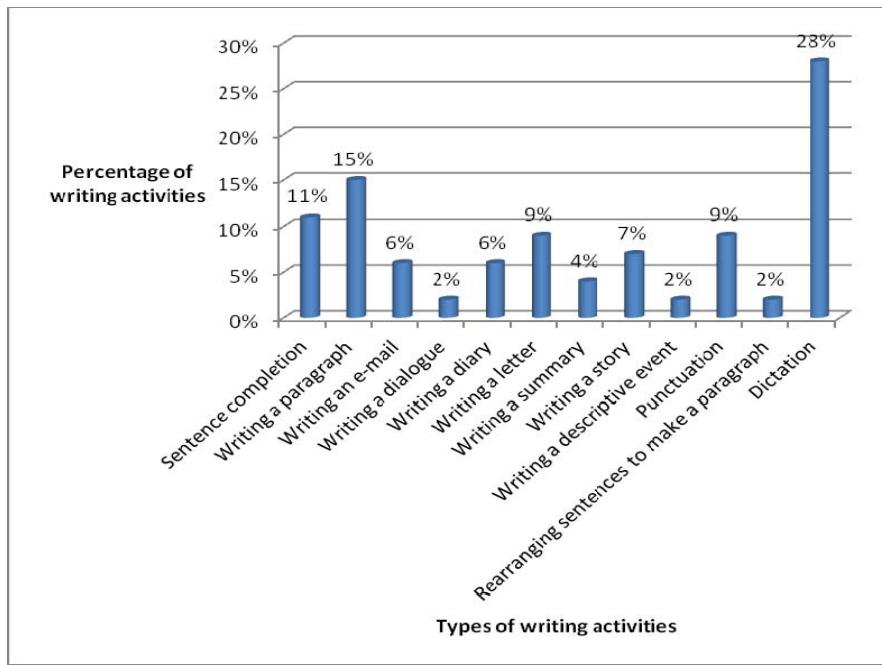


Fig. (4.8): Writing activities and exercises in the Eighth grade workbook.

While the number of the types of writing that is used in the ninth grade workbook is the same as that of grade eighth. Some types of writing activities are no more used in Ninth grade. There are six types of writing activities which are practiced through Forty- Seven writing activities, and represented 7% of the total number of writing activities that are used in the workbooks (1-9).

Handwriting, mechanical copying, sentence completion, and rearranging alphabetically are no longer used in the ninth grade workbook. While the remaining types of writing that are used in this grade is a continuation of the previous grades.

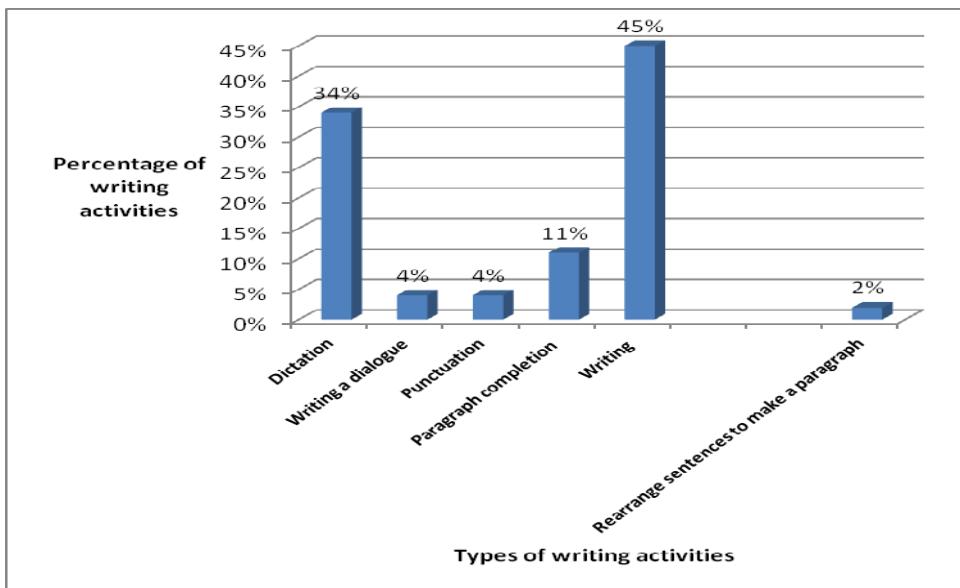


Fig. (4.9): Writing activities and exercises in the Ninth grade workbook.

It's ranged that the types of writing activities in the workbooks (1-9) extended between sentence completions and rearranging sentences to make a paragraph. The number of types of writing activities used in every workbook (1-9) is more diversified as we move from one grade to another, but certain types of writing activities are repeated. These include such activities as dialogue completion and punctuation which are almost used in all grade levels. By contrast, other types of writing activities are classified which certain grade levels. For example, writing an invitation are solely used in (third grade workbook), writing a recipe are part of the (third and sixth grades workbooks), writing a post card is included in the (fifth, sixth and ninth grades workbooks,), dictation is used in the (first, third, eighth and ninth grades workbooks) and so on.

While in the Student books (1-12), the activities are represented more in the students' books for higher stages from (10-12), as noticed from the table. Furthermore, the number of free writing tasks and controlled writing tasks had the same quantity. However, the free writing task types included: sentence completion, organize and write down one's own ideas, and to write with due attention to the structure and development of passages. The writing textbooks included paragraph or essay writing activities of self-expression. Non personal topics (road safety problems, writing an encyclopedia entry,

environmental, international exchanges) were presented as topics of free composition.

4:2:2 Results of the Second Question

Do the teachers' opinions differ about the writing skill activities and exercises due to (gender, qualifications, years of experience, and levels they taught)?

To answer the question, the researchers used the arithmetic means and standard deviations for the questions of the questionnaire and were calculated as shown in the following table (4.10).

Table (4.2): The Mean scores and standard deviations for the questionnaire:

Number		Mean	Standard deviation
1	Writing activities and exercises are appropriate to the students' age group.	3.80	1.06
19	Writing activity topics help students to learn vocabulary content.	3.78	1.01
8	Writing activities and exercises are varied.	3.74	0.90
18	Writing activity topics are related to other skills.	3.73	0.95
20	Writing activity instructions are clear.	3.69	0.93
2	Writing activities and exercises are related to the students' needs and interest.	3.65	1.08
14	Writing activities and exercises consolidate language presented previously and practiced orally.	3.62	0.90
13	Writing activities and exercises help students to use the grammatical structure in the unit.	3.60	1.13
9	Writing activities and exercises are presented in a logical sequence.	3.57	1.09
5	Writing activities and exercises help students to develop their communicative skills.	3.49	1.02
12	Writing activities and exercises are	3.46	1.08

	applicable.		
16	Writing activity topics are related to students' background knowledge.	3.45	1.11
15	Writing activity topics incorporate individual, pair and group work.	3.40	1.19
17	Writing activity topics are meaningful and up to date.	3.38	1.13
7	Writing activities and exercises match the students' level.	3.35	1.09
4	Writing activities and exercises help students to become independent learners.	3.34	1.17
11	Writing activities and exercises are challenging and motivating.	3.33	1.13
3	Writing activities and exercises take into consideration the individual differences among students.	3.27	1.33
10	Writing activities and exercises are interesting.	3.27	1.14
6	Writing activities and exercises are difficult for most of the students.	3.08	1.38
21	The time allotted for the writing component is appropriate compared to the time for other skills.	3.00	1.24
Total degree		3.48	0.63

Teaching English to students' means teaching them to comprehend what they read and understand what they listen to. It also means teaching students to express themselves and communicate their thoughts in spoken words and in writing. Therefore, to complement the earlier questions which attempt to improve the efficacy of the activities and exercises show to be extremely agreeable to the effectiveness of activities and exercises in the English Palestinian textbooks. The arithmetic mean reached a mean to (3.80) with a standard deviation of (1.06).

Regarding the time allotted for the writing component, the results show that the majority of the teachers don't agree that the time is appropriate compared to the time for other skills. The mean score is (3.00) and the standard deviation is (1.24).

To answer the second question, the following hypotheses were examined:

4:2:1:1 Results of the First Null Hypothesis:

There are no differences at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) of the teachers' opinions about the writing skill activities and exercises due to gender.

To examine the first null hypotheses, T-test is used to test the means of teachers' opinions about the writing skill activities and exercises that can be attributed to gender.

Table (4.3): t-test results of teachers' opinions about the writing skill activities and exercises due to gender.

Gender	Number	Means	St.dev	dF	T	Sig.
Male	33	3.40	0.70	91	0.83	0.405
Female	60	3.52	0.59			

Table (4.3) shows that "t" is (0.83), the significant level is (0.405), so there are no differences at the level of significance of teachers' opinions about the writing skill activities and exercises that can be attributed to gender, so the null hypotheses is accepted.

4:2:1:2 Results of the Second Null Hypothesis:

There are no differences at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) of the teachers' opinions about the writing skill activities and exercises due to qualifications.

To examine the second null hypotheses, One Way ANOVA is calculated to test the arithmetic means of teachers' opinions about the writing skill activities and exercises that can be attributed to qualification.

Table (4.4): Mean scores and standard deviations of teachers' opinions about the writing skill activities and exercises due to qualifications.

Qualification	Number	Mean	St.dev
Diploma	6	3.64	0.33
B.A	73	3.48	0.66
B.A(ed)	4	3.48	0.52
M.A	8	3.36	0.76
M.A (ed)	2	3.33	0.40

Table (4.5): One Way ANOVA results of teachers' opinions about the writing skill activities and exercises due to qualification.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	0.311	4	0.078	0 .187	0.945
Within Groups	36.517	88	0.415		
Total	36.828	92			

Table (4.5) shows that “F” is (0.187), the significant level is (0.945), so there are no differences at the level of significance of teachers' opinions about the writing skill activities and exercises due to qualifications, so the null hypotheses is accepted.

4:2:1:3 Results of the Third Null Hypothesis:

There are no differences at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) of the teachers' opinions about the writing skill activities and exercises due to years of experience:

To examine the third null hypotheses, One Way ANOVA is used to test the arithmetic means of the teachers' opinions about the writing skill activities and exercises due to years of experience:

Table (4.6): Mean scores and standard deviations of teachers' opinions about the writing skill activities and exercises due to years of experience:

Years of experience	Number	Mean	St.dev
Less than 5 years	9	3.49	0.40
5-10 years	27	3.41	0.64
More than 10 years	57	3.51	0.66

Table (4.7): One way ANOVA results of teachers' opinions about the writing skill activities and exercises due to years of experience:

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	0.184	2	0.092	0.227	0.798
Within Groups	36.643	90	0.407		
Total	36.828	92			

Table (4.7) shows that “F” is (0.227), the significant level is (0.798), so there are no differences at the level of significance of teachers' opinions about the writing skill activities and exercises due to years of experience, so the null hypotheses is accepted.

4:2:1:4 Results of the Fourth Null Hypothesis:

There are no differences at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) of the teachers' opinions about the writing skill activities and exercises due to grades taught:

To examine the fourth null hypotheses, One Way ANOVA is used to test the arithmetic means of the teachers' opinions about the writing skill activities and exercises due to grades taught:

Table (4.8): Mean scores and standard deviations of teachers' opinions about the writing skill activities and exercises due to grades taught:

Grades taught	Number	Mean	St.dev
1-4grade	24	3.53	0.63
5- 10 grade	34	3.56	0.58
11-12 grade	35	3.36	0.69

Table: (4.9): One way ANOVA results of teachers' opinions about the writing skill activities and exercises due to grades taught.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	0.764	2	0.382	0.954	0.389
Within Groups	36.063	90	0.401		
Total	36.828	92			

Table (4.8) shows that “F” is (0.954), the significant level is (0.389), so there are no differences at the level of significance of teachers' opinions about the writing skill activities and exercises due to grades taught, so the null hypotheses is accepted.

4:2:3 Results of the Third question

Results of the interview will be presented with respect to the questions.

1- *Do the writing activities and exercises vary from one grade level to another?*

With regard to teachers' assessment of the first question, most of them agreed and felt that some of the activities and exercises should be omitted and changed to suit the students' level age group. According to the answer for the questionnaire about the suitability of the activities and exercises show that there were a conflict of ideas which had a high mean (3.80)

2- *Are the writing activities and exercises progressive or not?*

Teacher interviewees provided the same answers for this question agreeing that the writing activities and exercises are interesting and share the same style.

3- *Do the writing activities and exercises help and motivate students to write independently?*

For the third question, the participants' teachers provided the same answers, which included the following:

- 1- Students need to write in English not only for chatting, they sometimes need it to work in the future, to express their ideas in writing. By contrast, the activities and exercises don't help and motivate students to write independently.
- 2- Academically, students need writing everywhere, in writing essays, in taking exams, and in literature for the eleventh and twelfth grades. But, the exercises and activities which are in the Palestinian curricula do not give the students a good opportunity to be independent writers.

4- *Are the writing activities and exercises suitable for the students' age?*

Teachers' opinions about the writing activities and exercises are suitable for the students' age, were found positively influenced by the answers of the questionnaire which had mean 3.80. They agreed that most of the activities in the textbooks start with words which encourage students to read and write freely.

While the supervisor's answers were the following (Bethlehem Directorate):

- 1- Do the writing activities and exercises vary from one grade level to another?

If we survey the text books starting grade 3 and upward I find the writing activities are varied. We can find that students start with writing about things related to their real life such as responding to a letter or writing an e-mail or a postcard. If we move a little bit up to grades 9 -12 we find that most topics are related to the reading text they sometimes write about choices for future learning route or writing about the places we can see in Palestine. The writing text deals not only with topics

related to student real life but also to some global problems such as talking about globalization, environmental problems, so we see both local and global topics.

2- Are the writing activities and exercises progressive or not?

I think they are. We start from controlled writing in which students have to follow a model then gradually moving to somehow controlled to guided and to free writing in 11th and 12th grades in which students have some notes to take into consideration when writing.

3- Do the writing activities and exercises help and motivate students to write?

Since most of them are somehow related to students' real life, I think they are motivating and students can express their own thoughts and ideas. The problem we face in writing is not with the topics we have but with the strategies that teachers follow in teaching the writing skill. I think that writing should be taught as a process. Topics should be discussed. Teachers have to generate ideas, using pictures, brainstorming. Students also have to write drafts. Teachers write responsive feedback commenting on the ideas, language, word choice and connectors. Students afterwards read notes rewrite the second draft making use of feedback.

4- Are the writing activities and exercises suitable for the students' age level?

Concerning students' level I think they are suitable. But they need more time to work with especially with huge number of students in class and also if we really want to develop their writing skill we need time since this skill is the most difficult one.

4:3 Major Findings

Based on the analysis of textbooks (1-12), we need to be more carefully consider how to help students advance from simple learning of grammar and vocabulary to entirely independent writing. It would appear that more free

writing activities and exercises are required in textbooks in order to enhance students to be independent learners.

In the light of the interview results, the following conclusions can be recognized:

- 1- The researcher noticed that most of the teachers were agreeable that some of the activities and exercises should be omitted and they didn't have time to teach these activities and exercises.
- 2- The interview assured that teachers felt that some activities and exercises are not suitable for the student's age level while the supervisor saw that these activities and exercises are gradually moving to somehow controlled to guided and to free writing in higher grades.
- 3- Results of the analysis showed that the dominant type of writing activities and exercises, was controlled writing.
- 4- It is necessary to introduce more free writing activities and exercises since these types are required to enhance students' abilities in developing the writing skill.

4:4 Comparisons of Results

Data results from the questionnaire showed that there were no differences at the level of significance of writing activities and exercises that can be attributed to (gender, years of experience, qualification, grades taught), this indicates that the activities and exercises are related to the students' age level. Furthermore, they are motivating and encourage students to express their opinions freely.

Chapter Five

Discussion and Recommendations

5:1 Introduction

5:2 Discussion of the Results of the First Question

5:3 Discussion of the Results of the Second Question

5:3:1 Discussion the Results of the First Null Hypothesis

5:3:2 Discussion the Results of the Second Null Hypothesis

5:3:3 Discussion the Results of the Third Null Hypothesis

5:3:4 Discussion the Results of the Fourth Null Hypothesis

5:4 Recommendations

Chapter Five

Discussion and Recommendations

5:1 Introduction

This chapter presents the discussion of the results of the study, and recommendations based on the results.

5:2 Discussion of the Results of the First Question:

What are the types of writing activities included in the Palestinian curricula?

The main findings of the textbooks comparisons are as follows:

Results of workbooks (1-9)

The results of this study showed that writing activities and exercises are available in workbooks more than the student books. There are 670 of activities and exercises. However, there are 250 writing activities and exercises in the student books (1-12).

Results revealed that only mechanical copying is used in the first and second grades workbooks. There is no actual copying in these workbooks. All the activities and exercises are tracing, circling, matching or dictation. But these activities and exercises aim to prepare students for actual activities later. This finding is in harmony with Caldwell and Moore (1991).

Writing activities and exercises further develop as we move from one workbook to another, which enables students to acquire the writing skill. More emphasis is given to the types of writing activities and exercises that are started from earlier grades. Mechanical copying, for example, is used from workbook one to workbook two. When writing a recipe is used for the first time in workbook three, it is used once and represented 0.9 % of the total number of this type of writing activities and exercises in workbooks (1-9). Furthermore, when writing a project is introduced for the first time in workbook four, it is used 3 times and represented 2 % of the total number of this type of writing activities and exercises in workbooks (1-9), and so on.

This shows that writing activities and exercises used in workbooks (1-9) vary from one grade to another.

Results of student books (1-12)

The results shows that there is an increase in the number of activities and exercises from 9 student book three to 52 in student book five that can be attributed to the repetition of writing activities and exercises from earlier grades in large numbers in workbooks (1-9). Furthermore, the results showed that the dominant type of writing activities and exercises in student books (1-12) was controlled writing.

By contrast, free writing activities and exercises had a low number in both student books and workbooks. It is necessary to introduce more of these writing activities and exercises, since these types of writing are required to develop writing skills that will enable students to become independent writers in the future.

5:3 Discussion of the Results of the Second Question:

Do the teachers' opinions differ about the writing curricula activities and exercises due to (gender, qualifications, years of experience, and levels they taught)?

-The researcher discussed the main question by turning it to the following null hypotheses.

5:3:1 Discussion of the Results of the First Null Hypothesis:

There are no differences at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) of the teachers' opinions about the writing skill activities and exercises due to gender.

To examine the first null hypothesis, a t- test was used. It indicated that there were no differences between males and females to their response for the questionnaire, so the null hypothesis was accepted. This means to some extent, both male and female teachers have attitudes towards the activities and exercises. This could be due to the fact that they mostly have similar educational background and experiences in teaching the Palestinian Curricula textbooks. Furthermore, the results might be explained by the fact that male and female teachers participated in training workshops which aimed at improving them and enabling them to employ the best strategies in teaching.

In general, teachers always look for new teaching strategies to encourage the students to be central of the learning process and the teacher is the facilitator in that. In addition, the researcher refers to their willingness and readiness to use new activities which concentrate on teaching writing to help students to be independent ones,

5:3:2 Discussion the Results of the Second Null Hypothesis:

There are no differences at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) of the teachers' opinions about the writing skill activities and exercises due to qualification.

The results showed that there were no differences between teachers' attitudes which mean that teachers, regardless of the degree or qualifications, seem to have the same attitudes towards activities and exercises. The "F" value is (0.187), at a significant level of (0.945), so there were no differences at the level of significance of teachers' opinions about the writing skill activities and exercises due to qualifications. Therefore, the null hypotheses was accepted.

The researcher believes that the teachers with different qualifications receive many educational courses which teach them to use different strategies in teaching writing to raise their students' level. This explanation is included in the teachers' interview; some of them said that they know teaching writing strategies too much because they have received many training courses in the Ministry of Education that enabled them to apply this strategy effectively. The Ministry of Education offers courses for teachers about the effective use of strategies to teach writing regardless of the qualification degree. It provides teachers with training courses that help them master their English writing teaching skills.

5:3:3 Discussion the Results of the Third Null Hypothesis:

There are no differences at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) of the teachers' opinions about the writing skill activities and exercises due to years of experience.

There were no differences at the level of significance of teachers' opinions due to years of experience, so the null hypothesis was accepted. The

researcher believes that the teachers with different years of experience are receiving many training courses in education which help them use effective activities for teaching writing. More so the Ministry of Education shows interest in training and providing the modern strategies to all other teachers, as to raise the level of their students, regardless of their years of experience. The Ministry of Education provided all teachers with modern teaching methods to raise and improve the teacher's level and to help them to overcome of all difficulties in their teaching process. Finally, there are English teachers who are very keen to raise their level .They do this by working hard on themselves; by continuing their education, or looking for related sources which enable them to raise their level which affect their students positively.

5:3:4 Discussion the Results of the Fourth Null Hypothesis:

There are no differences at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) of the teachers' opinions about the writing skill activities and exercises due to grades taught.

There were no significant differences at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) of teachers' opinions about the writing skill activities and exercises due to grades taught, so the null hypothesis is accepted.

The researcher believes that the Ministry of Education is interested in training teachers to be qualified and capable of teaching different stages. In addition, teachers have to learn, for example, how students learn including their constructivist nature of learning. They have to understand the objectives of different strategies to enable students to be independent ones and evaluate their students' development focusing on student- centered method.

5:4 Recommendations

In the light of the results of this study, the following recommendations are made and directed to English language teachers, researchers and decision-makers at the Ministry of Education.

1-For English Teachers:

- a- EFL teachers must cover the student books and workbooks materials to help students develop their writing skill.
- b- Teachers should help students to interact with various activities that are favorable and applicable.
- c- Encourage English Teachers to use different kinds of writing activities in teaching by training them on how to implement these activities effectively in teaching.

2-For the Ministry of Education:

- a- The Ministry of Education should work hard to design more special training courses on writing teaching and development for teachers. In particular, teachers should be trained to be qualified to teach this skill.
- b- Appropriate training program should include all University students who will be English teachers.
- c- Writing activities and exercises that are used in English for Palestine (1-12) need to be reviewed to cope with the students' age group.

3-For Further research:

- a- More researches should be carried out to analyze activities concerned with other skills namely, listening, reading and speaking.
- b- Appropriate training program should include all University students who will be English teachers.

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Appendices

Appendix Number One

Questionnaire

Dear Teachers:

The researcher is conducting a study entitled “An analysis of the writing skill exercises and activities in “English for Palestine” from grades one to twelve”.

The study is a requirement for an M.A. degree in Education at Al Quds University. The information obtained will be treated confidentially. This questionnaire is used for the purpose of research only.

Thank you for your cooperation

The Researcher: Rula Qumsiyeh

Please put (X) in the appropriate space.

Personal Information

Gender: Male Female

Qualification: Diploma B.A. M.A. (ed)

B.A. (ed) M.A. (literature)

Years of Experience: Less than 5 years 5-10 years More than 10 years

Grades taught: 1-4 5-10 11-12

Writing skills textbooks

No.		Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Strongly Disagree	Disagree
1.	Writing activities and exercises are appropriate to the students' age group.					
2.	Writing activities and exercises are related to the students' needs and interests.					
3.	Writing activities and exercises take into consideration the individual differences among students.					
4.	Writing activities and exercises help students to become independent learners.					
5.	Writing activities and exercises help students to develop their communicative skills.					
6.	Writing activities and exercises are difficult for most of the students.					
7.	Writing activities and exercises match the students' level.					
8.	Writing activities and exercises are varied.					
9.	Writing activities and exercises are presented in a logical sequence.					
10.	Writing activities and exercises are interesting.					
11.	Writing activities and exercises are challenging and motivating.					
12.	Writing activities and exercises are applicable.					
13.	Writing activities and exercises help students to use the grammatical structure in the unit.					
14.	Writing activities and exercises consolidate language presented previously and practiced orally.					
15.	Writing activity topics incorporate individual, pair and group work.					
16.	Writing activity topics are related to students' background knowledge.					
17.	Writing activity topics are meaningful and up to date.					

18.	Writing activity topics are related to other skills.				
19.	Activity topics help students to learn vocabulary content.				
20.	Writing activity instructions are clear.				
21.	The time allotted for the writing component is appropriate compared to the time for other skills.				

Appendix Number Two

Writing Activities in “English for Palestine” Workbooks (1-9)

Grade	Type of writing activity	No. of writing activities	Type of writing activity	Percentage
First	Mechanical Copying 1-Tracing 2-Circling 3-Matching 4-Dictation	61	Controlled writing	42 %
		20		14 %
		38		26 %
		27		18 %
		Total 146		
	Total 146			
Second	Mechanical Copying 1-Handwriting 2-Matching 3-Sentence completion 4-Letters writing	49	Controlled writing	26 %
		21		11 %
		47		25 %
		71	Guided writing Controlled writing	38 %
		Total 188		
	Total 188			
Third	Dialogue completion	12	Guided writing	11 %
	Letter completion	3		3%
	Sentence completion	69		63%
	Meaningful copying	13	Controlled writing	12%
	Dictation	9		8%
	Rearranging sentences to make a paragraph	2		1.8%
	Writing a recipe	1	Free writing	0.9%
	Writing an invitation	1	Free writing	0.9%
	Total 110			
Fourth	Handwriting	37	Controlled writing	28%
	Dialogue completion	26	Guided writing	20%
	Sentence completion	57	Guided writing	43%
	Rearranging letters to make words	1	Controlled writing	0.7%
	Writing a letter	4	Guided writing	3%
	Rearranging words to make meaningful sentences	3	Controlled writing	2%
	Writing a shopping list	2	Free writing	1.5%
	Writing a project about (family – friends)	3	Free writing	2%
	Total 133			
Fifth	Sentence completion	22	Guided writing	52%
	Completing a table	1		2%

	Punctuation	5	writing	12%
	Rearranging alphabetically	8		19%
	Writing a postcard	2	Free writing	5%
	Sentence writing (using connectors)	4	Controlled writing	10%
	Total	42		
Sixth	Sentence completion	15	Guided writing	43%
	Rearranging sentences to make a paragraph	4	Controlled writing	11%
	Dialogue completion	1	Guided writing	3%
	Punctuation	5	Controlled writing	14%
	Spelling (body parts – sea – fruit)	3		9%
	Sentence writing (using connectors)	2		6%
	Writing a recipe	1		3%
	Writing a postcard	2		6%
	Rearranging alphabetically	2		6%
	Total	35		
Seventh	Punctuation	2	Controlled writing	8%
	Sentence completion	4	Guided writing	17%
	Sentence writing	12	Controlled writing	50%
	Rearranging sentences to make a paragraph	1		4%
	Adding the correct suffix	4		17%
	Completing a table	1		4%
	Total	24		
Eighth	Sentence completion	6	Guided writing	11%
	Writing a paragraph	8		15%
	Writing an e-mail	3		6%
	Writing a dialogue	1		2%
	Writing a diary	3		6%
	Writing a letter	5		9%
	Writing a summary	2	Controlled writing	4%
	Writing a story	4	Free writing	7%
	Writing a descriptive event	1		2%
	Punctuation	5	Controlled writing	9%
	Rearranging sentences to make a paragraph	1		2%
	Dictation	15		28%
	Total	54		
Ninth	Dictation	16	Controlled writing	34%
	Writing a dialogue	2	Guided writing	4%
	Punctuation	2	Controlled writing	4%
	Paragraph completion	5	Guided writing	11%

	Writing (story- reply- report- letter- postcard)	21	Free writing	45%
	Rearrange sentences to make a paragraph	1	Controlled writing	2%
	Total	47		
		Total	679	100%

Appendix Number Three

Writing Activities in “English for Palestine” Student Books (1-12)

Grade	Type of writing activity	No. of writing activities	Total No. of writing activities	Percentage
Third	Rearranging sentences to make a letter	2	Controlled writing	22%
	Sentence completion	6		67%
	Writing a recipe	1		11%
	Total	9		
Fifth	Sentence completion	7	Controlled writing	14%
	Completing a table	2		4%
	Punctuation	6		12%
	Rearranging sentences to make a paragraph	6		12%
	Rearranging alphabetically	6	Free writing	12%
	Dictation	6		12%
	Rearranging words to make a sentence	6		12%
	Writing a postcard	1		2%
	Sentence writing	12		23%
	Total	52		
Sixth	Sentence writing	8	Controlled writing	20%
	Punctuation	3		8%
	Rearranging words to make a sentence	4		10%
	Rearranging sentences to make a paragraph	7		18%
	Rearranging alphabetically	1	Free writing	3%
	Dictation	6		15%
	Sentence completion	11		28%
	Total	40		
Seventh	Punctuation	7	Controlled writing	21%
	Dictation	6		18%
	Sentence completion	7	Guided writing	21%
	Rearranging sentences to make a paragraph	3	Controlled writing	9%
	Writing a letter	5	Free writing	15%
	Completing a table	2	Controlled writing	6%
	Writing a paragraph	4	Free writing	12%
	Total	34		
Eighth	Rearranging sentences to make a paragraph	3	Controlled writing	10%
	Sentence completion	6		20%
	Writing an e-mail	2	Free writing	7%
	Writing a paragraph	8		27%
	Writing a diary	1		3%

	Writing a letter	3	Free writing	10%
	Writing a story	4		13%
	Writing a report	1		3%
	Punctuation	1		3%
	Sentence writing	1	Free writing	3%
	Total	30		
Tenth	Punctuation	7	Controlled writing	24%
	Writing a story	2	Free writing	7%
	Writing a report	3		10%
	Writing an interview	1		3%
	Writing a reply	1		3%
	Writing a paragraph	4		14%
	Writing a letter	4		14%
	Paragraph completion	4	Controlled writing	14%
	Completing a table	2		7%
	Questions and answers completion	1	Guided writing	3%
	Total	29		
Eleventh	Punctuation	2	Controlled writing	7%
	Paragraph completion	6		21%
	Writing a letter	4	Free writing	14%
	Writing an encyclopedia entry	1		3%
	Writing a report	2		7%
	Writing an e-mail	2		7%
	Writing an essay	1		3%
	Writing a diary	1		3%
	Writing a story	1		3%
	Writing a paragraph	5		17%
	Rearranging sentences to make a paragraph	4	Controlled writing	14%
	Total	29		
Twelfth	Guided questions and answers	1	Guided writing	4%
	Paragraph completion	1	Guided writing	4%
	Sentence completion	1		4%
	Rearranging sentences to make a paragraph	5	Controlled writing	19%
	Writing a postcard	1	Free writing	4%
	Writing a letter	3		11%
	Writing a newspaper report	3		11%
	Writing an essay	5		19%
	Writing a descriptive story	3		11%
	Writing a paragraph	4		15%
	Total	27		
		Total	250	100 %

Appendix Number Four

Questions of the interview

1. Do the writing activities and exercises vary from one grade to another?
2. Are the writing activities and exercises progressive or not?
3. Do the writing activities and exercises help and motivate students to write independently?
4. Are the writing activities and exercises suitable for the students' age?

Appendix Number Five

Original Questionnaire

Dear Teachers and Supervisors:

The researcher is conducting a study entitled “An analysis of the writing skill exercises and activities in “English for Palestine” from grades one to twelve”.

The study is a requirement for an M.A. degree in Education by Al Quds University. The information obtained will be treated confidentially. This questionnaire is used for the purpose of research only.

Thank you for your cooperation

The Researcher: Rula Qumsiyeh

Please put (X) in the appropriate space.

Personal Information

Gender: Male Female

Qualification: Diploma B.A. M.A. (ed)
 B.A. (ed) M.A. (literature)

Years of Experience: Less than 5 years 5-10 years More than 10 years

Grades taught: 1-4 5-10 11-12

Section A: Teachers' qualifications

No.		Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Strongly Disagree	Disagree
1.	English departments at universities prepare teachers to deal effectively with the writing skill at school.					
2.	The Ministry of Education provides enough pre or in service training courses on how to teach writing.					
3.	Teachers have to be familiar with the syllabus writing skill objectives.					
4.	Teachers have to be familiar with the writing activities and exercises aims.					
5.	Teachers have to be familiar with different strategies on how to teach writing.					
6.	Teachers have to allocate more time for practicing writing.					
7.	Teachers have to train students to be independent learners.					
8.	Lack of teachers' experience obstacles the progress of teaching writing skill.					
9.	Students' weakness in writing is due to weakness in other language skills.					
10.	Teaching writing skill is difficult.					

Section B: Writing skills textbooks

No.		Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Strongly Disagree	Disagree
1.	Activities and exercises are appropriate to the age group.					
2.	Activities and exercises are related to the students' needs and interests.					
3.	Activities and exercises cope with the individual differences among students.					
4.	The activities and exercises used help students to become an independent learner.					
5.	Activities and exercises help students to develop communicative skills.					
6.	Activities are difficult for most of the students to deal with.					
7.	Activities and exercises match with students' level.					
8.	Activities and exercises comply with the art of pedagogy in writing.					
9.	Activities and exercises are varied.					
10.	Activities and exercises are presented in a logical sequence.					
11.	Activities and exercises are interesting.					
12.	Activities and exercises are challenging and motivating.					
13.	Activities and exercises are workable.					
14.	Activities and exercises help to use the grammatical structures.					
15.	Activities and exercises consolidate language already presented and practiced orally.					
16.	Activity topics incorporate individual, pair and group work.					
17.	Activity topics are related to students' background					

	knowledge.				
18.	Activity topics have no language mistakes.				
19.	Activity topics are meaningful and modern.				
20.	Activity topics are derived from other skills.				
21.	Activity topics help students to learn vocabulary.				
22.	Activities instructions are clear.				
23.	The time allotted for writing component is appropriate with other skills.				

Appendix Number Six

A list of Experts:

Name	
Dr. Afeef Zeidan	Al – Quds University
Dr. Ziad Qabaja	Al – Quds University
Brother Michael Murphy	Bethlehem University
Dr. Khader El zoughby	Bethlehem University
Dr. Nourma Musleh	Bethlehem University
Dr. Hazim Najjar	Bethlehem University
Mrs. Huda Musleh	Bethlehem University
Brother Peter Iorlano	Bethlehem University
Dr. Suad Al Abed	Al- Quds Open University
Supervisor: Rula Khalil	Bethlehem Ministry of Education
Teacher: Nancy Al- Hayek	Beit Sahour Secondary School for Girls

List of Appendices

Title	Page
Questionnaire	66-68
Activity Checklist	69-73
Interview Questions	74
Original Questionnaire	75-78
A List of Experts	79

List of Tables

No.	Table's Title	Page
3.1	The distribution of the population due to gender	26
3.2	The distribution of the sample due to (gender, qualification, years of experience, grades taught)	26-27
4.1	Types of writing activities in the students' books and workbooks from grades (1-12)	32-35
4.2	The Mean scores and standard deviations for the questions of the questionnaire	44-45
4.3	T-test results of teachers opinions about the writing skill activities and exercises due attributed to gender	46
4.4	Mean scores of teachers' opinions about the writing skill activities and exercises due to qualification	47
4.5	One Way ANOVA results of teachers about the writing skill activities and exercises due to qualification	47
4.6	Mean scores and standard deviations of teachers' opinions about the writing skill activities and exercises due to years of experience	48
4.7	One Way ANOVA results of teachers' opinions about the writing skill activities and exercises due to years of experience	48
4.8	Mean scores and standard deviations of teachers' opinions about the writing skill activities and exercises due to grades taught	49
4.9	One Way ANOVA results of teachers' opinions about the writing activities and exercises due to grades taught	49

List of Figures

No.	Figures Title – Workbooks (1-9)	Page
4.1	Writing activities and exercises in the First grade workbook.	36
4.2	Writing activities and exercises in the Second grade workbook.	37
4.3	Writing activities and exercises in the Third grade workbook.	38
4.4	Writing activities and exercises in the Fourth grade workbook.	39
4.5	Writing activities and exercises in the Fifth grade workbook.	40
4.6	Writing activities and exercises in the Sixth grade workbook.	40
4.7	Writing activities and exercises in the Seventh grade workbook.	41
4.8	Writing activities and exercises in the Eighth grade workbook.	42
4.9	Writing activities and exercises in the Ninth grade workbook.	43

Table of Contents

Title	Page
Declaration	i
Acknowledgment	ii
Abbreviations	iv
Abstract	v
الملخص	vi
Chapter One : Problem of the study and its significant	1
1:1Introduction	2-3
1:1:1 Importance of the writing skill	3-5
1:2Problem of the study	5
1:3The Research Questions	5
1:4 Hypotheses of the Study	6
1:5 Purpose of the Study	6
1:6 Significance of the Study	7
1:7 Limitations of the Study	7
1:8 Definition of terms	7
Chapter Two: Theoretical Framework and Previous Studies	8
2:1 Introduction	8
2:2 Historical Backgrounds	8
2:2:1 Teaching writing for EFL learners	8-10
2:2:2 Teaching writing in L1	10-13
2:2:3 Differences between L1 and L2 writing skill	13
2:3 Types of writing activities	14
2:3:1 Controlled Writing	14+15
2:3:2 Free Writing	15

2:3:3 Translation	15-16
2:4 Previous Studies	17-23
2:5 Summary	23
Chapter Three: Methodology and Procedures	23
3:1 Introduction	25
3:2 The Design of the study	25
3:3 Population of the Study	25
3:4 Sample of the Study	26
3:4:1 Instrumentations	27
3:4:2 The Validity of the Instruments	28
3:4:3 The Reliability of the Instruments	28-29
3:5 The Study Procedures	29
3:6 Variables of the Study	29-30
3:7 Statistical Analyses	30
Chapter Four	31
Results of the study	32
4: 1Introduction	32
4:2:1 Results of the First Question	32-43
4:2:2 Results of the Second Question	44
4:2:1:1 Results of the First Null Hypothesis	46
4:2:1:2 Results of the Second Null Hypothesis	46
4:2:1:3 Results of the Third Null Hypothesis	47
4:2:1:4 Results of the Fourth Null Hypothesis	48
4:2:3 Results of the Third Question	49-51
4:3 Major findings	52
4:4 Comparisons of Results	52
Chapter Five : Discussion and Recommendations	53
5:1 Introduction	54
5:2 Discussion of the Results of the First Question	54-55
5:3 Discussion of Results of the Second Question	55

5:3:1 Discussion the Results of the First Null Hypothesis	55-56
5:3:2 Discussion the Results of the Second Null Hypothesis	56
5:3:3 Discussion the Results of the Third Null Hypothesis	57
5:3:4 Discussion the Results of the Fourth Null Hypothesis	57
5:4 Recommendations	58
References	59-64
Appendices	65-80
List of Tables	81
List of Figures	82
List of Content	83-85