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The Importance of Using Cooperative Learning Technique in Enhancing EFL Learners' Writing Achievement

A Case Study: Second Year Student of English (LMD) of the Department of English at Biskra University

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A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF **Master** IN SCIENCES OF LANGUAGE

Submitted by: **Supervised by:**

- Djaballah Ismail   ***** Mrs. Guettel Imene

Board of Examiners:

- President: Dr.Chelli Saliha (Mohamed Kheider, university of Biskra)
- Examiner: Mrs.Warda Khouni (Mohamed Kheider, university of Biskra)
- Supervisor: Mrs.Guettal Imene (Mohamed Kheider, university of Biskra)

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Dedication

First and foremost I dedicate this dissertation to my wonderful family. Particularly to the dearest person in the world to my **mother,** Mom, you have given me so much, thanks for your faith in me, and for teaching me that I should never surrender.

I would like to thank my beloved sisters **Amina** and **Fatiha** for their support and help.

I would like to dedicate this humble work to my dear friends who have taught me so much.

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Abstract

Writing in a foreign language seems to be the most difficult language skill for language learners to acquire in academic contexts. The explicit instruction of its strategies is not a usual practice in foreign language classrooms which could be beneficial for language learners to develop their writing. The present study aims at investigating the importance of using cooperative learning as a technique in teaching writing to second year students of English as a Foreign Language at the department of English at the University of Biskra. In order to check this correlation, we have hypothesized that the use of cooperative learning in EFL classes will help learners to enhance their writing achievement. And If EFL teachers have positive attitudes towards the use of cooperative learning and become aware of its structures, students will develop their writing skill. And also, if learners' attitudes are positive towards cooperative learning, the learners' writing skills will be improved. To verify the validity of these hypotheses, we have conducted a descriptive approach. We used two research instruments, questionnaire for the students and an interview for teachers. The first one is composed of twenty questions and administered to sixty 2nd year students of English. The interview consists of twelve questions given to five teachers of writing. All of them are teaching at the same department during the academic year 2012-2013. The discussion of the results has shown that the students have positive attitudes towards the cooperative learning, the teachers also have positive attitudes toward the cooperative learning, but they do not apply it with all its elements. They apply it in very random way .Teachers should be aware of the importance and theoretical background of the cooperative learning for having effective results.

List of abbreviations

- ➢ **EFL**: English as a Foreign Language.

- ➢ **CL**: Cooperative Learning.

- ➢ **BAC** : Baccalaureate

- ➢ **L2**: Second Language.

- ➢ **2nd**: Second.

- ➢ **%**: Percentage.

- ➢ **LMD** : Licence, Master, Doctorat.

- ➢ **ZPD:** Zone of proximal development.

- ➢ **Q**: Question.

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General Introduction

Introduction

The main aim of teaching English is to develop the four language skills, i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing. Writing is one of the four language skills which are given great emphasis in second language learning. Students learn writing in different ways, but they encounter many difficulties which deprive them to produce good pieces of writing. The mastery of the writing skills is crucial since constant evaluation either formative or summative is conducted to gauge students' acquisition of their writing skills based on their writing performances. Therefore, teachers adopt and adapt a variety of methods in the writing classes to ensure that the students do extremely well in writing. Different methods and approaches have been used by Algerian English language teachers to teach writing. In order to ensure students' mastery of the writing skills, teachers need to employ methods and approaches which produce positive outcomes in the students learning. One of the recommended methods in teaching writing is the incorporation of cooperative learning. When the cooperative learning technique is implemented properly, it can provide an ideal way to cultivate supportive relationships between students. At the same time, learning in teams can help supply pupils with the necessary critical thinking skills that will prepare them to be ready for entering the occupational life with more chances. In general, cooperative learning can be said to lead to the formation of attitude and values, provision of models of prosaically behavior, presentation of alternative perspective and viewpoints, building a coherent and integrated identity, and promotion of critical thinking, reasoning, and problem-solving behaviour (Johnson & Johnson, 1999). All of this results in writing skills improvement, better self-esteem and increased achievement.

1. Background and Significance of the Study

More than twenty years of extensive research involving over eighty research studies and a series of extensive reviews of existing research on cooperation and learning dating back to the late 19th century. Both the learning outcomes and the social dynamics of cooperative learning have been studied under a number of conditions. Slavin (1989-1990) regards it as "one of the most thoroughly researched of all instructional methods" (p. 52).

Johnson and Johnson & Smith (1991) also describe the amount of research conducted over the past ninety years as "staggering" .He claims also that during this period of time, more than six hundred studies have been conducted by a wide variety of researchers in different decades with different age subjects, in different subject areas, and in different environments. We come to know the efficacy of cooperative learning than we know about lecturing (p. 28).

Research on cooperative learning considered as one of the greatest issues in the history of educational research. While there was some research on this topic since the early days of this century, the amount and quality of that research greatly accelerated in the early 1970's, and continues unabated today, a quarter-century later. Hundreds of studies have compared cooperative learning to various control methods with a broad range of measures, but by far the most frequent objective of this research is to determine the effects of cooperative learning on student achievement. Cooperative learning is not merely a subject of research and theory; it is used at some level by many teachers. A recent national survey found that (79%) of elementary teachers and (62%) of middle school teachers reported making some sustained use of cooperative learning (Puma, Jones, Rock, & Fernandez, 1993).

Likewise, (Kagan, 2009) found out that peer response technique affected the students' attitudes positively in a way that enhanced the development of their writing skill. In conclusion,

the findings show that these instructional tools were effective in improving students' reading and writing skills.

Cooperative learning is proven to be an enormously effective method for learning. It allows and encourages students to explain what they are learning with each other, learn each other's point of view, give and receive support from classmates, and help each other dig below the superficial level of understanding of the material they are learning. It also leads to greater acceptance of differences based on ability, ethnic background, and gender. It provides a structure for resolving conflict through negotiation and is being used to reduce school violence (Johnson, Johnson & Holubec (1998).

The present study is not so far from the previous publication aims, the current research and the research of many others has established that when students work together cooperatively is a powerful way for them to learn and has positive effects on the classroom climate (D.Johnson & R. Johnson, 1983).

2. Statement of The Problem

One of the greatest challenges confronting English as Foreign Language (EFL) learners is to improve their writing production, which is actually the concern of both EFL learners and instructors. Teachers have adopted many techniques for helping their students to perform better in writing. However, rote learning has been a common practice in the Algerian educational view in language learning. Thus, students are always treated like empty boxes, which must be filled with facts. The students are frequently ignored, anxious and oppressed. The frequent use of this method deprives EFL learners from learning better in writing. It is believed that the current university educational system should move beyond the rote learning method as it is considered outdated by most people. A new teaching technique should be implemented to create comforting

and harmonious classroom atmosphere. Cooperative learning is considered as one of the approaches, which shows positive results in boosting the students writing skill and in creating the best relaxing atmosphere in classrooms (Kagan & High, 2002).

In EFL context, missing many key components or completely excluding the cooperative learning method from the classroom results in students lacking in social and educational skills. Within the writing skill which is the main concern of the study, the absence of these latter results in EFL learners' weakness to produce good and correct pieces of writing and teachers fail to attain the main course set objectives.

In addition, in many contexts where cooperative learning, even though, it has been proven to be used in teaching writing. Students who would benefit from cooperative learning techniques are not instructed with this method, but they continue to perform poorly in writing. Even though some teachers believe they are using cooperative learning correctly, it is often incorrectly applied, or it is completely omitted from the curriculum.

3. Research Questions

The present study will seek answers to the following questions:

a) What is cooperative learning in EFL class?

b) How could cooperative learning implemented correctly in classroom?

c) What are the main cooperative learning structures?

d) Will the use of Cooperative learning help EFL students to perform better in writing?

e) To what degree is EFL teachers aware of cooperative learning structures?

f) What are EFL teachers' and learners' attitudes towards using cooperative learning in writing?

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4. Hypotheses

In this work, we hypothesize that:

a) If we use the cooperative learning in EFL class, it will help learners to enhance their writing achievement.

b) If EFL teachers have positive attitudes towards using cooperative learning and become aware of its structures, students will develop their writing skill.

c) If learners' attitudes are positive towards cooperative learning, the students' writing skills will be improved.

5. The aim of study

The study aims to examine the importance of using cooperative learning in EFL classes to help students to perform better in writing at Biskra University, also, to check students' attitudes towards cooperative learning in improving their writing performance. Moreover, investigating written expression teachers' attitudes towards incorporation of CL in their classes and knowing if they are really aware of the cooperative learning structures. Also, consulting the main writing problems faced by EFL learners and tries to suggest alternatives and recommendations for a better writing achievement.

6. Research Methodology Design

6.1. Research Method

The research methodology of this study is descriptive in order to describe and obtain a lot of information on the subject. It is also observational, because we observe the subject without intervening.

6.2. Population and Study Sample

This academic study aims to investigate the significance of using cooperative learning technique, and to ensure EFL learners' mastery of writing skills in Algeria, specifically full-time second year LMD system students enrolled at the Biskra University (Department of English). We have chosen Biskra University to conduct our study because it is where we are studying and it is familiar to us.

The whole population of the study consisted of second year students of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) at Department of English at the University of Biskra during the academic year 2013-2014. The total number of the students' population was around 540 hundred. The participants were from different socio-economic background and from different geographical regions in Algeria and different genders, male and female.

This population selected for two reasons. The first reason is that 2nd year students have already studied at least one year at university; therefore, they would have experienced working in groups at least once, even in other modules. Thus, they would have an opinion and an attitude toward it.

In addition, we selected the second year teachers of written expression as a part of our population because they have an experience in the field which can help us conducting the study. The teacher sample included five (5) teachers of (6) teachers, the participants who contributed in responding to the designed interview.

6.3. Data gathering tools

Data collection and analysis included questionnaires for students and interview with teachers. We did choose them because they allow us to establish a rapport with the respondents. They permit more depth information and obtain visual cues. Also, they give the ability to reach a large number of people and allow respondents to provide us with immediate responses.

7. The structure of the Dissertation

The present study consisted of two sections. Section one consists of two chapters. The first chapter presents a review of some theoretical issues in writing, which included the nature of writing and stating the differences between speaking, reading and writing .and then we shed light on the most common stages of writing .We also explored the difficulties that face students in writing .finally, this chapters provided some teaching approaches that help teachers to teach writing. The second chapter provided a deeper view into the cooperative learning, and it presented the nature and theoretical background of the CL .It also reviewed the basic elements of CL, identifying social roles of both the teacher's and the student's .This chapter explored the critical benefits of the CL. Finally, we provided the teachers with the most basic CL methods.

Section two contains two chapters that dealt with data analysis. The first chapter contained a detailed analysis of students' questionnaire, the second chapter dealt with the analyses of the teachers' interview.

The Literature Review

Chapter One: Writing Process

Introduction

Learning any foreign language requires learners to master the four skills of the target language. Teachers of the language frequently follow a certain order in teaching the skills of language; beginning with listening, speaking, reading and then writing. Writing always left on at the end because it is viewed as the most significant, most difficult and most complicated skill in comparison with the other language skills. Writing, therefore, is an essential skill in language learning; it is also a difficult skill that requires extensive effort and practice on the learners' part to achieve a good level in writing. In this chapter, we will present the nature of writing and its importance as a medium of communication, we will view the relationship between writing, speaking and reading as well as their shared cognitive processes. Then, we will shed light on the stages of writing process. We will also, present some difficulties that face the learners in writing. Finally, we will extrapolate the approaches of teaching writing.

1. The Nature of Writing

Writing is one of the four skills which are used in communication. When we write we use graphic symbols, a written symbol that is used to represent speech. Writing can be said to be the act of forming these symbols, making marks on a flat surface of some kind (Byrne, 1991, p. 1).

Crystal (2006), notes, language study always distinguishes spoken from written language; but writing does not capture the range of expressions that the visual medium makes available. Written implies, first, handwritten, but obviously there are several additional ways of presenting written language such as texts on mobile phone. The term "Graphic" shall be used as an expression to include all these modes .While the phrase "graphic language" shall not be used ,

as found in such fields as typography , because it applies , graphs , and/or musical notation (P. 97).

Yule (2010) defined writing as follows:

> We can define writing as the symbolic representation of language through the use of graphic signs. Unlike speech, it is a system that is not simply acquired, but has to be learned through sustained conscious effort. Not all languages have a written form and, even among people whose language has a well-established writing system, there are large numbers of individuals who cannot use the system .(p. 212)

Through Yule's definition we come to know that writing in its nature is different from speaking. According to Byrne (1991), certainly, the meaning of writing goes beyond the graphic symbols or visual marks. It is parallel to speech, which is more than just the production of sounds .These symbols should be arranged according to certain conventions in order to form words, then organizing words to form sentences . Eventually, one would arrange a sequence of sentences in a particular order and link them together in certain ways. Perhaps the sequence can be short because of organizing and linking together sentences, they form coherent whole text (p. 2).

Writing is not an easy task and not so difficult. There is no great deal about some methods of composing a text but most people agree that writing often is neither an easy nor a spontaneous activity. Sometimes we write well when we are in the right mood or having a great need to express something. We have to be completely mentally conscious when we write. The process of rereading what has been written before stimulates us for further reading and writing (Byrne, 1991).

Byrne (1991) argued that the reader is the motivator for writing. Therefore, writing involves the encoding of a message involve translating our thoughts into language. The reader is

not someone who is physically present .Thus; we chose a particular way of communication in writing rather than the common way of speaking directly, face to face. Because our reader is not present, and even sometimes unknown, we should write our message in plain and understandable ways that can be easily grasped. We should be very careful when we write to make this piece of writing completely coherent and easy to read .This would enable us to communicate successfully with our readers through writing (pp. 1-2).

2. Writing and Speaking

When we try observing the process of writing, how people write. We need to consider the similarities and differences between writing and speaking in terms of their forms and in the processes. Despite the marked differences they are sometimes much similar and done the same (Harmer, 2004, p. 6 -7).

2.1. Time and Space

According to Harmer (2004), speaking based on the here and now communication; it is done in immediate situations. In other words, it is temporary. Whereas, writing is different, it goes beyond time and space, and it is permanent. It lasts for a long time (p. 7).

Crystal (2006) sees that the relation between speaking and writing goes as follows:

> The structure and use between spoken and written language are inevitable , because they are the product of radically different kinds of communicative situations .Speech is time-bound, dynamic, transient-part of an interaction in which , typically , both participants are present , and the speaker has a specific addressee (or group of addressees) in mind .Writing is space-bound, static, permanent –the result of a situation in which, typically, the producer is distant from the recipient , and , often may not even know who the recipient is (P. 149).

2.2. The Participants

The participants in any written interaction cannot see each other; therefore, they do not rely on the context to clarify what they mean. Contrasting with speaking interaction, writing avoids words when constructing the meaning which mainly relies on situations such as (deictic expression, like one, this…) .Writing lacks the immediate feedback which is available in any spoken interaction .Thus, careful attention must be taken to minimize the effects of vagueness and ambiguity (Harmer, 2004, p. 7).

2.3. Process

Harmer (2004) argued that writing and speaking are highly differentiated in the processes that writers and speakers go through. In any face-to-face communication, thoughts occur between words with speed, when something said, it cannot be easily unsaid. Though, speakers can go back and say it in different ways, trying to modify what they are saying (p. 8).

Speech is an immediate process in which speakers make quick decisions and readjust their speech with uttering different words, using repetition, rephrasing and buying-time expressions (such as, well, you know ...).These expressions help the speakers to gather ideas, and then put them in the appropriate form or words. Writing is different in terms of its production, it is not instant. During writing, the writer has an ample time to plan and modify what will be obvious to the audience as the final complete piece of writing. This is what is called "the writing process" with its reclusiveness and various drafting (Harmer, 2004, p. 8).

It is quite difficult in internet and text messages to display the process of writing in a very detailed way. Speaking also is not all time process-free acts. Some speakers make careful planning and drafting in their heads before uttering a single word .Sometimes people rewrite what conversation in their minds after some event has taken place in the real world . They think

that if they said something in very clever way, it would be better than what has been used. Consequently, the process of writing is frequently more complex than the process of speaking, but not constantly (Harmer, 2004, p.8).

2.4. Organization and Language

The spontaneous way of speech and written text construction demonstrates very important differences in organization and the language employed. Most of writing follows much defined discoursed organization. Speaking and writing are different in the level of correctness and the issue of well-formedness (Harmer, 2004, p.9). Speakers always produce incomplete, or often ungrammatical sentences, hesitation and pauses are common and usually some redundancy and repetition (Byrne, 1991, p.3).

Crystal (2006), reported that written language is considered to be more formal than spoken language, it is a source of providing the standards of the society, and also writing is considered to be more trusted in legal agreement rather than spoken agreements . Sacred writings thought to be the sources of identity and authority of a religious tradition (pp.150-151).

3. Writing and Reading

Writing and reading are considered the most crucial productive skills which have a very close relationship. The connection between reading and writing has frequently been viewed in simple terms: Reading well results in well writing. Although this relationship has been recognized for a long time, researchers have often been further interested in understanding the sources of the relationship. The result of studies that have investigated this issue showed multiple realities. For example, researchers come to view reading and writing as two skills that share similar processes. They argue that readers and writers go through similar processes to either comprehend or create meaning (Eisterhold, 1990).

Eisterhold (1990) found three possible hypotheses for the reading-writing relationship. These hypotheses are: The first one is "The directional hypothesis" which States that reading and writing share structural components that can be applied in each one. The second is "The nondirectionality hypothesis ", the reading-writing link is nondirectional. In other words, the transfer in the nondirectional model can occur at either direction. For example, from reading to writing or from writing to reading. The third hypothesis is "The bidirectional hypothesis" which Posits that reading and writing are interactive skills and interdependent as well on knowledge and process bases (p. 89).

Fitzgerald (1989) argues that writing and reading, or, such sub processes of writing and reading as revision in writing and critical reading are highly related and employ similar thought processes (p.42).

The reading and writing processes are closely linked and interdependent in which each of the two cannot develop in isolation from the other, and cannot develop before the other. As we write, we continuously re-read what has been written before to re-organize and re-focus our thoughts. We usually read what have been written by other people in order to shape the direction of our own thoughts and to find confirmations of our own ideas in writing of others as well as to extend our thinking. Smith's description of the reading-writing relationship suggests that "the desire to write provides an incentive and direction for reading and reading also acts as an incentive for writing" (DeFord, 1986, p.79).

Despite their different characterizations, writing as a productive skill, and reading as a receptive skill, both complement each other, and skill in one results in a proficient use of the other. Therefore, better writers lean to be superior readers, and better writers tend to read more

than poorer writers, and that better readers tend to produce more systematically mature writing than poorer readers (Stosky, 1983, p.636).

Chomsky (1975) also believed that being able to read is a prerequisite of the acquisition of writing. (pp.499-518). In conclusion, Mackey(1965) considers that all four skills are interwoven and contribute to an effective learning. He states that before one can write, he or she has to be able to read and shape the letters of the alphabet before writing sentences, to say them aloud (p. 436).

4. Stages of Writing Process

The writing process as a private activity may be broadly seen as comprising four main stages: planning, drafting, revising and editing. The stages are neither sequential nor orderly. In fact, as research has suggested that "many good writers employ a recursive, non-linear approach - writing of a draft may be interrupted by more planning, and revision may lead to reformulation, with a great deal of recycling to earlier stages" (Krashen, 1984, p. 17)**.**

4.1. Planning (Pre-writing)

The Prewriting stage is about generating material or ideas or both. Whether gathering information which a writer has inside his head or researching outside sources, it stimulates thoughts to start. It includes anything a writer does before actually begins to write. This includes coming up with the basic ideas, researching information and it differs from one to another up to their cognitive abilities (Byrne, 1991).

During planning writers should think about three major issues .First, they have to decide the "purpose" of their writing which later on would influence their style of writing, their information and the language they employ .The second issue is the "audience " which they are writing for .This does not only influence the form of language ,but also the kind of language

whether it is formal or informal .Finally, the third one is the" content structure " of the piece of writing which is about how to order facts and ideas that the writer determined to include (Byrne, 1991, pp.4-5).

4.2. Drafting

Drafting is a series of stages during which the student concentrates on getting ideas on paper. The emphasis is on content rather than mechanics, especially during the first draft. Not all drafts will be published. The majority are rehearsals for final, polished pieces (D'Aoust, 1986).

Several teachers employ a standardized format during the first draft stage of writing. The "hamburger" strategy utilizes a pattern that looks like a hamburger. The top bunk is for the topic sentence (or opening sentence), the middle sections, the meat, cheese, pickle, and condiments, or for the supporting details, and the bottom bun is what holds everything together, so it is the strong conclusion (D'Aoust, 1986).

D'Aoust(1986) stated the following:

> Not all students need structural support techniques in order to write. Students who can successfully write without using structures should never be required to conform to a standardized structure. Forcing a student to use a strict format such as a hamburger paragraph or a five-paragraph essay will stifle their voice and creativity. However, all students benefit from teacher modeling, the process of observing as the teacher thinks aloud as a piece of writing is composed. (p.7)

The majority of written expression teachers know which student needs a structural guideline and which student does not need. It is often up to the teacher to find out how and when to give each person the instruction and support that he or she needs.

When students are ready to start writing their first drafts, they should use one of their pre-writing to guide them. Students may need to be shown that much of their work is already

accomplished in their pre-writing. This will encourage them as they proceed through the writing process. Students will then view pre-writing as a beneficial and not just one more thing to do (D'Aoust, 1986).

By using a pre-writing instrument, students' minds are open to look at the more technical aspects of their writing. They may need more teaching to help transition from one idea to another or an event to another one, to add supporting facts, dialogue, and to express themselves with their own voice. Each draft will expand differently as students revise, edit and publish their pieces (Ibid).

4.3. Revising

This stage is when students review their written piece on the basis of the feedback given in the responding stage. They check what was written to make sure how efficiently they have communicated their meanings to the reader. Revising is not like editing; checking for language errors .Its purpose is to improve global content and the organization of ideas so that the writer's intent is made clearer to the reader (Beck, 1986, p. 149).

Beck (1986) sees that rewriting does not mean recopying. Thus the teacher collects and keeps the students' drafts, and then asks them to write them again. "When the students are without their original drafts, they become more familiar with their purposes and their unique messages. Writers often move more skillfully within their topics, and their writing develops their confidence and authority" (Ibid).

Revision frequently becomes more voluntary and motivating. The teacher has another option to have individual students read their own texts; he asks them to record their reading and take a dictation of their own writing later. Students can replay the tape as often as necessary and

activate the pause button at points where they need to make productive revision of their texts (Ibid).

4.4. Editing

At this stage, writers are engaged in tidying up their texts as they prepare the final draft for evaluation by the audience. They edit their work by rereading it and checking for grammar, spelling, punctuation, diction, sentence structure and accuracy of supportive textual material such as quotations, examples and the like. Reflecting and revising are usually helped by other readers who provide important comments and they give also some suggestions (Byrne, 1991, p.5).

5. The Writing Difficulties

We now come to understand why writing is a difficult task; people do not have only difficulty in writing in a foreign language, but also in their native language. In investigating the problems which are caused by writing, we should look at it under three headings: the psychological problems, linguistic and cognitive ones.

5.1. Psychological problems

People communicate normally and naturally using speech. It is used in almost all circumstances that accustom having someone physically present when using language and getting feedback. Writing, in contrast, is basically a solitary activity. It is necessary to write on our own. The lack of the probability of interaction or the advantage of feedback makes writing difficult. (Byrne, 1991, p.4)

5.2. Linguistic Problems

According to Byrne (1991) Spoken communication is maintained through a process of interaction except in some special circumstances, for instance, in a lecture the participants help to keep it going. Because speech is normally unplanned, having little time to concentrate either in

organizing our sentence structure or to connecting our sentences .We sometimes repeat and expand and so on , depending on how people act in response to what we say .Most of time unfinished and even ungrammatical utterances frequently ignored (Ibid).

Byrne (1991) stated the following:

> In writing, people have to compensate for the absence of these features ,we have to keep the channel of communication open through our own efforts and to sentences are linked together and sequenced ,that the text we produce be interpreted on its own .(P.4)

According to Byrne's statement, writing should be very clear and plain that can be easily understood without the need for face- to- face clarifications.

5.3. Cognitive Problems

We spend much time learning to speak. We appear to speak without much conscious attempt or thought and usually we talk because we want to know about anything that is interesting or relevant of our own socially or personally that is what speaking skill is special with. While, writing is learned through process of instruction; therefore, we must master the written form and learning some structures which are rarely when used or never be used in speech, but which are essential for communication in writing .We also must learn how to organize our ideas in such a way that can be understood by a reader who is not present and maybe being unknown (Byrne, 1991, pp.4 -5).

6. Approaches to teaching writing

Teaching writing is considered one of the most difficult tasks requiring many years of experience .The question which has been always asked is how to teach writing, there is no single accurate answer to this question. There are as many answers as there are teachers and different

teaching styles. There are several approaches used in teaching writing which are presented by (Raimes, 1983) as following:

6.1. The Controlled-to-Free Approach

In the 1950s and early 1960, the audio-lingual was the most controlled teaching method in second-language learning. The controlled-to-free approach focuses on speech and writing for achieving mastery of grammatical and syntactic forms. Therefore, teachers created some techniques to enable student to achieve this mastery. This approach is developed in sequential order: students are first given sentence exercises, then paragraphs to copy or manipulate grammatically by changing questions to statements, present to past, or plural to singular. Perhaps also transfer words to clauses or combine sentences. Through these controlled compositions, students are helped to write in easy way and avoid the trap of errors. Free composition is allowed for student to write after attaining an intermediate level of proficiency. This approach stresses on grammar, syntax, and mechanics. The Controlled-to-Free Approach emphasizes accuracy rather than fluency or originality (pp.6 -7).

6.2. The Free-Writing Approach

This approach stresses the quantity of writing rather than the quality. Teachers who depend on using such approach provide enormous amounts of free writing on given topics with only minimal correction. Therefore, this approach emphasizes content and fluency rather than accuracy and form. When ideas are written, grammatical accuracy and organization follow. Thus, perhaps teachers begin their classes by asking students to write freely on any topic without worrying about grammar and spelling usually for a short time. The teachers do not correct these pieces of free writing. They only read them perhaps comment on them. Occasionally, some of the students attempt to read their own writing aloud to the class (Raimes, 1983, P.7).

6.3. The Paragraph-Pattern Approach

According to Raimes (1983), the Paragraph-Pattern-Approach stresses on the organization of writing. Students copy paragraphs and imitate model passages. They put scrambled sentences into paragraph order. They identify general and specific statements and choose to invent an appropriate topic sentence or insert or delete sentences. This approach is based on the principle that in different cultures people construct and organize communication with each other in different ways (pp .7-8).

6.4. The Grammar-Syntax-Organization Approach

This approach stresses on simultaneous work on more than one composition feature. Teachers who follow this approach maintain that writing cannot be seen as composed of separate skills which are learned in sequence. Consequently, student should be taught how to pay attention to organization while they also work on the compulsory grammar and syntax. This approach links the purpose of writing to the forms that are needed to convey message. (Raimes, 1983, P.8)

6.5. The Communicative Approach

The communicative approach in language teaching starts from a theory of language as communication. The goal of language teaching is to develop what Hymes referred to as "communicative competence." Hymes coined this term in order to contrast a communica-tive view of language and Chomsky's theory of competence.

Nosratinia (2011) stated the following:

> A teacher can gain an understanding of his/her learners' strategy and style is a best thing. Teacher must learn the students' interest, motivation, and learning style by the behavior of students when learning language. Teachers attempt to avoid the bored and make match style in teaching to collaborate aim of students and teacher

in learning language. Teachers' motivation in learning language is important to motivate students when use a style in learning language and inform to them about the advantage and disadvantage of the learning style (p.23).

The communicative approach stresses the purpose of writing and the audience for it. Student writers are encouraged to behave like writers in real life and ask themselves the crucial questions about purpose and audience:

-Why am I writing this?

-Who will read it?

Traditionally, the teacher alone has been the audience for students' writing. But some feel that writers do their best when writing is truly a communicative act, with a writer writing for a real reader. As such, the readership may be extended to classmate and pen pals (Raimes, 1983, pp.8 - 9).

6.6. The Process Approach

In recent times, the teaching of writing has moved away from a concentration on written product to an emphasis on the process of writing. Therefore, writers ask themselves:

-How do I write this?

-How do I get started?

In this approach, students are taught to generate ideas for writing, and try to think of the purpose and audience, writing many drafts with the aim to present written products that help them to converse their own ideas. Teachers who use such an approach provide students with time to express ideas and have an appropriate feedback on the content of what they write in their drafts. (Raimes, 1983, pp.10 -11).

As such, writing becomes as process of invention for the students as they discover new ideas and new structures to express them. Additionally, Writing is seen as a developmental

process that helps students to write as professional authors do, choosing their own topics and genres, and writing from their own experiences or observations. A writing process approach requires that teachers give students greater responsibility for their own learning. Students should make decisions about genre and choice of topics, and collaborate as they write (Ibid).

Throughout the writing process, students engage in pre-writing, planning, drafting, and post-writing activities. However, as the writing process is recursive in nature, they do not necessarily engage in these activities in that order (Ibid).

Conclusion

This chapter accounted for the concept of writing by exploring its nature; how it acquired, and what are main stages in writing that all writers go through .And then, identifying where its difficulties and complexities lay and so on. Then, we have explained that the difference between, the productive skills, writing and speaking is not absolute. And also, we presented how reading plays an important role in improving the writing skill, in addition to this, the close relation between the two skills. The fourth section outlines the most important approaches to the teaching of writing. Consequently, according to what have been said before, we come to a conclusion in which we can say that writing is a difficult skill that requires both learners and teachers to have an essential knowledge and information in order to make the teaching and learning of the writing skill easier and significant. In an attempt to achieve we looked at writing as a process which goes through different stages rather than a product of accurate use of grammar, syntax and huge vocabulary.

Chapter Two: Cooperative Learning In EFL Classes

Introduction

Many years ago, it was taken for granted that the best learning class is the quiet one. Recently, many teachers have been more likely to motivate students for engaging them in cooperative learning groups. Students working in groups to be tremendously helpful or it can be of little value. Cooperative learning technique is considered to be the solution to all educational problems. It is frequently considered as an effective method used for developing the four skills and increasing higher-order learning; as an alternative to ability grouping, as a motivator, or as a way of improving ethnic relations. This chapter reviews the nature of cooperative learning, what really is, and provides some definitions of cooperative learning. Afterwards, we will clarify the difference between group work, collaborative learning and cooperative learning. This chapter also will review the theoretical background of cooperative learning, its basic elements, the roles of both the teacher and the learners, and then shed light on some of the benefits, which suggested by the researchers. Finally, we will present the common cooperative learning method.

1. The Nature of Cooperative Learning

It is so necessary first to establish what we mean exactly by the concept of cooperative learning (CL). "We could say, in essence, cooperative learning requires pupils to work together in small groups to support each other to improve their own learning and that of others" (Jolliffe, 2007, p.3).

This is not reasonably so simple, because there are variations on cooperative learning and some fierce arguments among academics as to the value of each. For example, should it include any element of extrinsic reward or should reward to be purely intrinsic. There are two essential concepts in any definition of cooperative learning, which relate to the amount of group support,

and to the degree in which every member of the group needs to learn and exhibit his or her accomplishments:

1.1. Positive Interdependence (We sink or swim together)

Learners in a small group are required to contribute to the learning. It is also the feeling among group members who helps one group member helps all group members, and what hurts one hurts all, 'one for all, and all for one' (Ibid).

1.2. Individual Accountability (No Hitchhiking!)

It means that each member of the group is responsible for finishing the given part of the work. "It is important that no one can 'hitchhike' on the work of others." This requires each group member to have an enhanced feeling of self-responsibility in order to learn and to help all group members. The team's success completely depends on the individual learning of all team members (Ibid).

1.3. Definitions of Cooperative Learning

There are various claims of pupils working together cooperatively. Indeed seating children in small groups is a common practice in UK classrooms but this, of course, may not mean they are cooperating. Thus, it is important to be clear about the defining features of CL (Galton & Williamson, 1992).

Oslen and kagan (1992), also defined cooperative learning as a group learning activity prepared in such a way, which makes learning more "dependent on the socially structured exchange of information between learners in groups and in which each learner is held. accountable for his or her own learning " and the learner is motivated to enhance other peers' learning (p.8).

Another definition suggested by Johnson and Johnson (1994):

> In cooperative learning, students work with their peers to accomplish a shared or common goal. The goal is reached through interdependence among all group members rather   than   working alone. Each member is responsible for the outcome of the shared goal. "Cooperative learning does not take place in a vacuum." Not all groups are cooperative groups. Putting groups together in a room does not mean cooperative learning is taking place. (p.26)

Davidson (1995) believes that "cooperation" is a very important concept in human affairs. He sees that the term "cooperation "have economic and biological interpretations. For example, the social meaning of cooperation can be seen from the side when combining different persons together for purposes of "production, purchase or distribution". The biological interpretation of cooperation can be noticed in the conscious or unconscious behavior of organisms living together, which results with survival value (p.197).

Cohen (1994) defined cooperative learning as follows:

> Students working together in a group small enough that everyone can participate on a collective task that has been clearly assigned. Moreover, students are expected to carry out their task without direct and immediate supervision of the teacher. (p.3)

This definition contains three key elements of CL. The first one is "the group size "which is sufficiently small to be helpful to all students who participate in any pair-task. The second one is structure; the task must be structured in very careful way and jointly undertaken by members of the group. Finally, each group should be able to work independent of the teacher.

Veenman, Kenter and Post, (2000) broadly defined cooperative learning as a teaching method in which the teacher place pupils together in small groups to help one another learn academic content.

1.4. Cooperative Learning versus Group Work

According to what stated before, cooperative learning has two main fundamental components. Tasks have to be structured in a way to ensure pupils are interdependent and individually accountable. The act of placing pupils into groups does not mean they will work together cooperatively. Jollife(2007) made the difference between the group work and cooperative learning as follows :

> Group work itself is nothing new or magical. Traditionally, primary schools have often organized pupils to sit in groups of four or six, although [the] interaction between them may be very limited. The reason underlying this is the ethos of individual competition where pupils often complain: 'He's copying me!' In this situation where pupils are not required to work collaboratively to complete a task, they would often be better working alone. (P. 4)

Cooperative groups are not like group work. In cooperative groups, students have to work together to achieve their mutual goals. Through the need to discuss tasks with each other, and providing their team members with help to understand the work. Obviously, this needs a regular process supported by a very comprehensive teaching program of small group and social skills together with a lot of tasks and teaching techniques (Ibid).

1.5. Cooperation learning versus collaboration Learning

It is very important to know the difference between the two terms "cooperation" and "collaboration." These two terms are often used interchangeably, but each one has a distinctive meaning.

1.1.1. Collaborative learning

It is a teaching-learning method in which students grouped together to discuss solutions to problems or create a meaningful project. For example, a group of students discussing a lecture

or students from different schools working with each other over the Internet on a shared assignment learning (Slavin, 1995).

1.1.2. Cooperative learning (CL)

It is considered as specific type of collaborative learning. In CL, students work together in small groups on a structured activity. They are individually accountable for their work, and the whole team's work is also assessed. Cooperative groups work "face-to-face "and learn to work as one team. They are working together to achieve shared goals. Students, in cooperative activities, seek outcomes that are useful to themselves and advantageous to all other group members (Slavin ,1995).

2. Theoretical Background of Cooperative Learning

There are several theories, which provided a helpful evidence for the effectiveness of using cooperative learning. Among all these theories, we are going to mention the major four theories, behavioral learning theory, cognitive developmental theory, social interdependence and motivational theory.

2.1. Behavioral Learning Theory

According to "Behavioral learning theory," students will work hard on those tasks for which they safe some rewards and will fail to work on tasks that contain no rewards or provide punishment. Cooperative learning is not only concerned only with rewarding individual students but also group rewards. Therefore, helps students to learn. This is called "motivational theory." According to the motivational perspective**,** individual and learning group reward is based on the sum of the individual's achievement. Because benefits are attained when group and individual goals are achieved when using cooperative learning. This would lead to make students more motivated to help each other and to make more efforts (Slavin 1995).

2.2. Cognitive Developmental Theory

Cognitive perspectives can be described in the following two parallel tracks. The cognitive development perspective is based on the theories of Jean Piaget and Lev Semenovich Vygotsky.

Vygotsky provides his concept of the "Zone of proximal development (ZPD) "in order to make sense of the relationship of society, the individual, social and Cognitive development. He defined the Zone, as a distance between what a child can do in isolation- that is, the actual development level, and what the child can do in collaboration with others. This he called the proximal level. And also, reported that the greatest growth in language and a child who was in a rich collaborative environment with an informed teacher made cognitive development. The cooperative classroom was such an environment because it provided the foundation for a communicative classroom, and was organized in collaboration (Vygotsky, 1978 as cited in McCafferty, Jacobs & DaSilva Iddings 2006)**.**

Piaget claims that every individual constructs his or her own understanding of the world around them through a search for equilibration, which means: The match between current schemas – background information – about the world and how it works, and what is experienced, on the other (Doise & Mugny, 1984, as cited in McCafferty et all, 2006).

McCafferty et al, stated the following:

> Piaget's ideas have been widely interpreted as supporting the creation of classroom environments in which students play active roles as they engage in real or at least realistic tasks....Scholars working in the Piagetian tradition emphasize the value of social contexts for arousing productive cognitive conflicts.(Doise & Mugny, 1984, as cited in McCafferty et all, 2006, p11)

2.3. Social Interdependence Theory

People need to communicate with each other. Interaction is very important for survival. In education, "social interdependence " refers to the efforts which students make for better achievement, to build up very positive relationships and to adjust their psychological perspectives, as well as to show social competence. "The social interdependence perspective of cooperative learning presupposes that the way social interdependence is structured determines the way persons interact with each other" (D.Johnson, L. Johnson & Holubec, 1998, p.69).

Furthermore, outcomes are the consequence of persons' interactions. One of the cooperative elements that have to be structured in the classroom is "positive interdependence" or cooperation. Therefore, cooperative learning increased interaction among learners as they restated and elaborated their ideas in order to express or simplify intended meaning. This interaction contributed to gains in learning (Ibid).

2.4. Motivational Theory

The Point of convergence of the motivational learning theories is on the impact of group reinforcements and rewards on learning. The cooperative goal structures create a situation in which the only way group members can attain their own goals is if the group is successful. Therefore; to meet their personal goals, group members help their group mates and encourage them to exert maximum effort. In other words, rewarding groups based on group performance, it creates an interpersonal reward structure in which group members will give or withhold social reinforcers in response to group mates' task-related efforts (Slavin, 1995 as cited in McCafferty et al 2006).

3. The Five Elements of Cooperative Learning

Cooperative learning is a teaching method in which students work in small groups to help one another to learn academic content, and students are expected to discuss and argue with each other, to assess each other's current knowledge. Most cooperative learning advocates agree that for a teaching method to fit the cooperative learning model, it must employ a number of characteristics cited as essential elements (Slavin , 1995).

Several researchers consider that cooperative learning consists of five basic elements: positive interdependence, face-to-face interaction, individual accountability, interpersonal and small-group skill, and group processing (Johnson & Johnson, 1994; Jolliffe, 2007). Each of these five elements would be discussed in the following section:

3.1. Positive interdependence

Each group member depends on each other to accomplish a shared goal or task. Positive interdependence is creating an atmosphere of cooperation in which each group member depends on the other to accomplish their mutual goal. And, to ensure that all members of the group learn the assigned material. Group members must recognize that without the help of one member, the group is not able to reach the desired goal. Therefore, they cannot succeed unless everyone succeeds (D.Johnson & R.Johnson 1994).

Johnson, Johnson, and Holubec (1998), believe that positive interdependence is the process of linking students together into groups that one member of each group cannot succeed unless all group members succeed (pp. 4-7).

Webb (2002) describes positive interdependence as the first and most important element in cooperative learning. In this element, the responsibility of the group and the individual is

structured into the lesson or subject. And also teachers should give a clear task and a group goal so that students believe they "sink or swim together" (p.9).

According to Slavin (1996), the success of each group depends on positive interdependence. The powerful positive interdependence enables students to recognize the need to cooperate.

According to Webb, in Face-to-Face interaction student do real work together, that is based on the idea that groups succeed only when members share resources, help, support, encourage, praise each other's efforts to learn, And questioning each other (2002, p. 11).

3.2. Individual accountability

The third element is individual accountability which is provided for each group member to assess their performance against a standard and take the responsibility for their contribution to achieve goals (Johnson & Johnson, 1994).They also asserted that the goal of cooperative learning is to enable each member of group stronger in recognizing his or her own right. Individual accountability is the key to make sure that each group member is strengthened through group work. The existence of individual accountability motivates students to learn more (Kagan & Kagan, 1998).

The goal of "Positive interdependence "is to form "responsibility forces" that make group members accept responsibility and accountability for completing each one's share of the work, and facilitating the work of the team members. Whilst one member of group's performance affects the outcomes of collaborators, the student feels accountable for the mates' welfare as well as his or her own (Matsui, Kakuyama & Onglatco, 1987).

Kagan (1990) believed that individual accountability was provided for each student. It was essential for a student to learn the material. All group members feel responsible of their own

and their teammates' learning and actively contributing for attaining the team's goals. Thus there were no problems between group members .Therefore, everyone contributes (pp.12-15).

Jacobs (2006) also defines individual accountability as; "the team's success depends on the individual learning of all team members" (p.5).

3.3. Interpersonal and small group skill

The fourth element is interpersonal and small group skill which is about giving positive feedback, attaining a consensus, and involving every member. It is essential for effective group functioning (Johnson & Johnson, 1994). When students participate regularly in cooperative activities, all students gain enduring intellectual abilities (Huss, 2006).

According to Johnson and Johnson (1995), when student are working into groups, students need to have some interpersonal skills and group skills as well as knowledge of the subject matter. Social skills must be taught to students in very organized and precise way as academic skills. Leadership, decision-making, trust building, communication and conflict-management skills allow students to manage their teams and be motivated to use the required skills for managing the task work (pp.122 - 129).

3.4. Group processing

The final element critical to make cooperation learning work is structuring group processing .Group Processing is about providing each group members an ample time, and a procedure to analyze how groups are functioning and how skills are employed in each activity. While the cooperative groups are in action, the teacher observes the groups, analyzes the problems that students may face, and provides a feedback and give an immediate reward if it is necessary about how well the groups were working (Johnson & Johnson, 1994). Group

processing is a clear development process can control over the quality of the work produced (Joliffe, 2007).

As a conclusion of what have been stated above, the interaction of theses five elements is very important and vital to cooperative learning; they help teachers who use cooperative learning to achieve the learning objectives. The mentioned five key elements of cooperative learning have emerged as critical to actual cooperation. The lack of incorporating these elements means that cooperation can not be effectively carried out (Jolliffe, 2007; Johnson, Johnson & Holubec, 1998).

4. Roles and Social Interaction in Cooperative Learning

Teachers are trained to plan their lessons and restructure them to be cooperative. Cooperative learning is the instructional use of small groups so that students work together to maximize their own and each other's learning (Johnson, Johnson&Holubec(1998).There are three types of cooperative learning from which the role of the teacher can be taken .They are stated as follows:

4.1. The Teacher's Role

1.1.3. Formal Cooperative Learning

Formal cooperative learning consists of students working together, for one class period to several weeks, to achieve shared learning goals and complete jointly specific tasks and assignments (Johnson et al. 1998). In formal cooperative learning groups the teachers' role includes:

1. Making pre-instructional decisions

According to Gillies, Ashman, and Terwel (2008), the Teachers' role depends on the following:

    a. Plan a lesson which contains both academic and social skills objectives.

    b.   Choose the number of students in each group.

    c.   Decide a method that helps in transferring students to groups.

    d.   Select and organize the roles that would be given to group members.

    e.   Manage the classroom

    f.   Rearranging the configuration of the materials students need to complete the task.

Through these pre-instructional decisions, the social skills objectives specify the interpersonal and small group skills students are to learn. And also, role interdependence is established (P.26).

2. Explaining the instructional task and cooperative structure

Teachers' role is depending on explaining the academic assignment to students, and the criteria for success. Teachers 'should structure positive interdependence, individual accountability, and also emphasize intergroup cooperation (Gillies et all, 2008, p.29).

3. Monitoring students' learning and intervening to provide assistance

Teachers should complete the task successfully through employing targeted interpersonal and group skills effectively. During conducting the lesson, teachers must control each learning group and give a feedback when needed to improve task work and teamwork. Through monitoring the learning groups that creates individual accountability. The teacher's observations make students constructive members (Ibid).

4. Assessing students' learning and helping students process how well their groups functioned

Teachers should make concise conclusions to each lesson, and also evaluate the quality, and quantity of student's achievement. Teachers must make sure how students discuss the task,

and how much successfully worked together. Finally, check students' plans for development (Gillies et all, 2008).

1.1.4. Informal Cooperative Learning

Informal cooperative learning consists of having students work together to achieve a joint learning goal in temporary groups that last from a few minutes to one class period (Johnson & Johnson , 1994).

Gillies et all (2008), argued that ''The teacher's role for using informal cooperative learning to keep students more actively engaged intellectually entails having focused discussions before and after the lesson (i.e., bookends) and interspersing pair discussions throughout the lesson''(p.30).Therefore, the teacher plays the role of a motivator for using the informal cooperative learning.

There are two essential aspects of using informal cooperative learning groups the teacher should be aware of using them .The first aspect is to make the task and the instructions clear and very precise. The teacher in the second aspect needs the groups to produce a specific product (Gillies et all, 2008).

The purpose of informal cooperative learning is to make sure that students are actively involved in understanding the material. And also provides ample time for teachers to listen to students. During listening to student discussions, teacher can give instructors and guides them. And also provides some insights to students for making students successfully understand the concepts and material being presented (Ibid).

1.1.5. Cooperative base groups

According to Gillies et all, (2008), the teacher's role in using "cooperative base groups" is to form heterogeneous groups of four or three students ,and then set timetable for regulating

their meeting, for example, the beginning and the end of each class session .The teacher should create specific agendas includes authentic activities for base groups when they meet. Teacher also must be sure that the five basic elements of effective cooperative groups are completely applied.

4.2. The Students' role

Cooperative learning has an effective social feature that makes several students enjoy group work. Through working cooperatively, students gain positive relationships between themselves that results in close friendship, and tutoring themselves .Unlikely, not all of them enjoy the cooperative group work. Sometimes, they complain about it and think that is just waste of time .Thus, for making cooperative learning more effective in the classroom, students' role is very important .students should enjoy the group work rather than rejecting it. If the students want to enjoy it, specific steps must be taken to establish the proper foundation for this particular learning environment. Within these steps lie the responsibilities of the student (Bennett & Smilanich, 1994).

5. The benefits of using cooperative learning in the classroom

Cooperative learning is a special method of teaching, with different expectations for teachers and for students, compared to traditional methods of teaching. The following are some of the benefits of using cooperative learning in the classroom:

5.1. Enhancing Student's Social skills

According to Carter (2001), the social skills attained through cooperative learning include: Communication, listening skills, leadership and trust building. He adds also that using cooperative learning regularly in classroom can help students to socialize fittingly and they can have chances to practice. Cooperative learning (CL) provides structures that help students to

transfer the skills they have learned into real life situations. In CL, students have the opportunity to discuss the given material with each other, and then explain it to each other. When they exchange information with each other this develops their performance. Students' social relationships improved because when students work together toward a common goal they have a chance to get to know one another as individuals Students have the feeling of having an opportunity to be successful, and they believe that they have mutual valuable goals (pp.37-38).

5.2. Appreciating Differences

The cooperative learning group work helps students to comprehend, maintain, and have a better feeling about themselves and their partners. Cooperative learning (CL) provides an atmosphere in classroom which encourages student to be in charge of their learning. CL highly motivated through "peer support". Through team support, students can achieve success by working well with others. CL promotes greater cross-ethnic interaction, and learns how to appreciate differences, as well as the acceptance of mainstreamed academically handicapped students determines that cooperative learning is an effective way to build community between home and school cultures with students having different cultural backgrounds and different languages. In CL settings, students from different backgrounds work cooperatively to attain mutual goals, and to work with each other as equals. Incorporating CL in the classroom improve student's relationships with others, especially those of various social and ethnic groups. It allowed them to look at the positive and negative parts of their own behavior (Lie 2000, p. 125).

5.3. Individualization of Instruction

According to Lie (2000), with cooperative learning groups, there is the potential for students to receive individual assistance from teachers and from their peers. Help from peers increases learning both for the students being helped, as well as for those giving the help. For the

students being helped, the assistance from their peers enables them to move away from the dependency on their teachers and gain more opportunities to enhance their learning. For the students who tend to help, the cooperative learning groups serve as opportunities to increase their own performance. They have the chance to experience and learn that teaching is the best teacher (pp. 121-131).

5.4. Increasing Students Participation

Cooperative learning activities provide a supportive environment which helps students to interact with each other. Not like the situation when they were engaged in the whole class setting. Cooperative learning (CL) encourages each team members to feel that they need to participate and learn. CL increases student's motivation to participate and interact with each other; therefore, creating an environment for productive learning (Lie, 2000, p. 125).

5.5. Strengthening Motivation

Lie (2000) believes that in cooperative learning groups students can encourage and help each other. The cooperative atmosphere of working in a small group may help develop "affective bonds" among students and greatly motivates them to work together .Cooperative learning (CL) promotes language learners by providing the appropriate structures that create a supportive and motivating environment. Thus, CL improves the motivation and psychosocial adjustment of students (Ibid).

5.6. Increasing Self-Esteem

The purpose of any educational system is to enable students to become more autonomous in their life and free them from the dependency on teachers, the activities that the teacher provides through cooperative group work assist students become more self-dependent learners

.Cooperative learning helps students to know how to build their own self-esteem and to trust other people (Ibid).

5.7. Reducing Anxiety

A cooperative small group reduces anxiety among students. Besides, when a student takes the leadership of the group and reports to the whole class, he or she feels less anxious, because the respond is not his own, but the product of the whole group (Ibid).

6. Methods And techniques of Cooperative Learning in the EFL Classroom

There are varieties of methods that can be used to support cooperative learning in the classroom. Each cooperative method has its own characteristics and applicability to different curriculum areas (Johnson & Johnson, 1999). In any foreign language classrooms; teachers should use the appropriate methods in order to get advantages from cooperative learning (Slavin, 1995).

Depending on how intensively teachers plan to use cooperative learning in their classroom, they first must be familiar with a variety of cooperative learning techniques. There are the brief introductions to these cooperative learning methods as the following:

6.1. Jigsaw

The first jigsaw activities were developed at the national training labs as teambuilding activities .Elliot Aronson and his associates were the first to apply the Jigsaw concept to the classroom.

According to Aronson, Stephan, and Snapp (1978), the jigsaw technique was developed in attempt to improve ethnic relations. It is based on the principle that each group members have the opportunity to share with others and to teach and be taught by their peers which is necessary for creating racially integrated teams. Students are gathered into a group of four or five and read

sections different from those read by their teammates. Then students share with others their own parts. Therefore, they benefit of making the experts possessors of unique information, and also make the team value each member's contribution. Then, after the discussion, each member will be tested on his or her understanding of the whole text. It is obvious that students have to depend on one another to learn all their material (P.30).

Wood (1988) argued that each group member has a distinctive material to learn it and to teach what he has learned to his group members. In the learning process, students help each other during class working on the same sub-section, they get together to decide what is important and how to teach it. After practice in these "expert group", the original groups reform and students teach each other tests or assessments (P. 17).

6.2. Jigsaw II

Jigsaw II is a teaching technique was originally developed by Slavin .In Jigsaw II technique, the teachers organizes students into groups in order to enable each group members to share information with each other, "This is a useful activity to teach reading" Slavin (1995). Slavin (1995) suggested some procedures for applying the Jigsaw II technique as follows:

a. Students should obtain proficient topics and read assigned material for finding some information.

b. Students with the same expert topics gathered into groups to discuss these topics.

c. The skilled students go back to their team to teach their topics to their teammates.

d. The teacher should provide students with individual quizzes which cover all topics.

e. Team scores are based on team members' improvement scores, and individual certificates, a class newsletter, or a bulletin board recognizes high-scoring teams.

6.3. Jigsaw III

This cooperative method is used for teaching bilingual learners some materials, and it focuses on developing social skills activities such as wrap up processing for students to examine whether they allowed others to speak, listened well and treated each other with respect and appreciation. It is also used at some raced schools to decrease segregation between the students for better community (Kagan, 1994).

6.4. Think-Pair-Share

Think-Pair-Share is a simple powerful cooperative structure that develops thinking skills. This technique consists of three steps. During the first step individuals think silently about a question posed by the instructor. The students think alone about the question for a particular amount of time. Then, in the second step, the students are paired up to discuss the question with each other. After the discussion .Finally, in the third step, students are asked to share their answers with the whole class. Student may also are called upon to share the answer they heard from their partners (Kagan, 1994, p.75).

Lyman (1981) believes that this teaching technique encourages students to communicate with others and develops their thinking skills. Therefore, he proposed four main steps of Think-Pair-Share:

    a. The teacher poses a discussion topic or an open-ended question.

    b. The teacher gives students the "think time" to think on their own.

    c. After thinking, students work in pairs to share their ideas with each other.

    d. Students share their responses with other partners or with the rest of the class.

6.5. Three-Step Interview

Kagan(1994) stated that three-step interview is a technique in which "Each student on a team in turn is interviewed by his/her teammates"(p.76).He adds also that the process of Three-step interview pass through three steps : During the first step each team members interview each other by giving a set of clarifying questions. Then in the second step each pair of students reverse the roles. In the final step, each one of two members shares his or her peer's response with the whole group (Ibid).

6.6. Round Table

Round Table technique can be used for brainstorming, reviewing, or practicing. Then, each group member has a selected turn for participating and making some written contributions to the group's project. In this method the group has a writing prompt, task, or question This method is ordered into steps. The first step is when the teacher asks a question which has multiple answers, each student writes a response or a portion of a response, and then after writing their response, they pass the paper to the next person. The next step is that "round table" can be down with one piece of paper per group or with one piece of paper per group member. Finally, one group member may be asked to share with the whole class what his or her group has written (Ibid).

6.7. Round Robin Brainstorming

Round Robin Brainstorming is one of the simplest and most commonly used Kagan Structures. In its basic form "Round Robin" is the oral counterpart of "Round Table". In this technique, students take turns for uttering answers or ideas, without recording them. The goal of using Round Robin is for participation in classroom. Classroom is divided into small groups of four to six with one person appointed as the recorder. The teacher poses a question with multiple

answers and then students are given time to think about answers. After having a time for thinking, members of the team share responses. The recorder writes down the answers of the group members, the person next to the recorder starts and each person in the group in order gives an answer until time is called (kagan, 2009).

6.8. Talking Chips

This method is used to ensure equal participation in discussion groups' .Each member in the team is given two or three chips, receives the same amount of chips (paper clips, pencils, or pens, etc). Each time when one person wants to talk, he or she places one chip in the center of the table. He or she cannot talk again until everyone has placed his or her chips in the center of the table. When all the chips have been used and the group still feels the need to talk, the chips can be retrieved and they can restart the process once more (Kagan, 1994, p.79).

6.9. Group Investigation

According to Sharan and Sharan (1992), "Group Investigations" was designed as a cooperative learning method to incorporate interaction in the classroom. Group Investigation is depends on an academic examination. It is based on some of John Dewey's educational goals and principles that help for practices. The process goes through six stages of group investigation. During the first stage, the class divided and organized into research groups each one takes different sub-topics. At the stages two and three, the group members start planning and carrying out their investigations. And then, during stages four and five, after finishing planning the groups make their presentations. Finally, the teacher and students evaluate their projects (pp. 234 -243)

6.10.Student Teams- Achievement Division (STAD)

The Student Team Achievement Divisions' (STAD) is a method originally developed by Robert Slavin. According to Slavin (1995), STAD is considered as the simplest of cooperative

group work learning techniques. In the STAD strategy the teacher divided students to four or five member teams "reflecting a heterogeneous grouping of high, average, and low achieving students" from different cultures and genders. Each week, the teacher provides students with new material. Afterward, each group members collaborate on worksheets intended to develop and strengthen the material taught by the teacher. The groups are designed to work on the worksheets in pairs, and may take turns for testing each other, or solve problems together .Finally, each team members use some strategies that help them to learn the assigned material. There are some attractive features of STAD that are simple for teachers to use. First, the teacher should assign the students to teams. Then, he should give an amount of time to the teams to study together, and gives the students a regular quiz, as well as calculates improvement and team scores (pp. 381-387).

Slavin (1995) also stated that STAD involves incorporating elements that increase the competition among groups. Students are gathered in heterogeneous groups by ability, gender, race, and ethnicity. Students learn in team and take quizzes as individuals. Each group member's scores contribute to a group score. All points which are contributed to the group are based on a student's improvement over any previous quiz performance (p.9).

6.11. Team Member Teaching

According to Salvin (1995) "Team Member Teaching" is a technique in which each member of the group is given a part of the whole. Group members are responsible for tutoring each other, each group member teaches the others about their portion. All students need preparation in how to effectively communicate information to others (pp. 628-634).

Conclusion

As a conclusion, cooperative learning is teaching technique which is different from the other techniques; its theoretical roots refer to many different theories. Cooperative learning has many advantages and benefits, sociological, psychological, and academic success. CL can play a good part sociologically in helping the students which makes them learn how to interact with each other, learn from other peers as well as evaluate themselves. Moreover, CL can increase EFL learners' self-esteem, increases their motivation, enhanced their self-confidence, reduces their anxiety, and created an affective social context of learning. To conclude we can say through cooperative learning approach students and teachers are in a state of dynamic interaction in the classroom. When students interact in cooperative groups, they learn to give and receive information, develop new understandings and perspectives, and communicate in a social context. Most researchers in the field of cooperative learning stress the necessity of incorporating the cooperative learning with its basic elements and its various methods ; if not, the benefits of CL would not be obtained.

Field Work

Students' Questionnaire/ Results and Analysis

Introduction

This chapter is concerned with the analysis of the students' questionnaire. A description of the questionnaire with its different sections is provided. The actual results are presented in the form of tables, including the percentages, followed by an analysis of the results.

1. Administration of the Students' Questionnaire

Given the impossibility to conduct the research on the whole population under investigation, we have administered the questionnaire to second -year LMD system at the Biskra– the option of Sciences of language, during April, 2013.The questionnaire was administered to sixty (60) of students. Taking diversity of the students makes us, far from being biased. The questionnaire was administered to (36) students at the first day. The rest were handed back after two days. The questionnaire was administered in a friendly and relaxed environment. The questions were clear enough in order to help the students' understand and thus provide appropriate answers. We were present and we illustrated everything that seem confusing to the participants.

2. Description of the Students' Questionnaire

Students' questionnaire mainly aims at investigating the students' attitudes and perceptions of cooperative learning as applied by their teachers, and whether they benefited from it. The questionnaire is wholly made up of 20 items classified under three sections each one focuses on a particular aspect.

2.1. Section One: Background Information (Q1-Q3)

This section contains three questions for gathering basic information from the participants. In the first question (Q1), the students were required to identify their Gendre; the second one was about the BAC streaming they have studied before. The last question (3Q) is about the students' choice of studying English.

2.2. Section Two: Students' Perceptions of the Writing Skill (Q1-Q7)

This section contains seven questions investigating some aspects of writing. In the first place, students are asked about their interest in writing (Q1), and are required to give explanations to their answers (Q2). Questions three and four (Q3, Q4) deal with the fear that can be generated in students for one reason or another. Then students are asked to identify how their teachers manage the class and make a good learning atmosphere (Q5).In (Q6) the students are required to give their opinions about their preferences if the way they like to work in written expression class. The last question in this section explores students' perceptions of the methods which used by their teachers in writing classes.

2.3. Section Two: Students' attitudes toward cooperative learning (Q1-Q10)

This is an extremely important part of the questionnaire because it reveals to us whether students like this technique and feel better when they work with it, which aims at gathering information about the students' attitudes towards cooperative learning technique. The first two questions in this section seek information about students' feeling toward working on groups and a justification of their answers. Then, students are asked about their feeling when they work in cooperative groups, and their reactions towards it, if it is the helpful technique (Q3-Q4) .The question (Q5) investigates how much the students have learned from cooperative group work.

This is the most important item in this questionnaire in which students are asked about their attitudes towards the use of cooperative learning in writing class and followed by the

justification their answers for gaining more understanding of their attitudes (Q6-Q7).After that the students are required to give their opinions on which way they should work in the cooperative team (Q8). The last questions (Q9-10Q) investigate the students' opinions towards cooperative learning as technique, which should be used by their teacher in writing class.

3. Analysis of the questionnaire:

3.1. Section one: "Background Information"

The first section deals with background information about the students in order to provide us with perspectives on the learners' learning, so we can anticipate the way how the responses will be like and to get clear statistics.

Item One: Gendre distribution.

Gender	Male	Female
Number of participants	9	51
Percentage	15%	85%

Table 1: Gender distribution of the students.

The table demonstrates that the majority of the population is females, which resembles (85%) of the total sample; it is an unavoidable fact in Algeria. Only (15%) of the participants are males. This explains the fact that females are more interested in studying English than males. So notably great number of females is reaching university. This is due to the number of females who go to school and on the second, it is that females have always shown a preference for language studies.

Item Two: Type of baccalaureate:

BAC streaming	Participants	Percentage
1. Philosophy and literature	4 Males _ 21 Females	41.66%
2. Science	2 Males _ 19 Females	35%
3. Foreign language	1 Male _ 10Females	18.33%
4. Economics	1 Male_1 Females	3.33%
5. Technical	1 Males	1.66%
Total	60	100%

Table 2: Students' baccalaureate streaming.

The results which taken from the table indicate the following: (18.33%) of the participants came from a literary stream, whereas (35%) came from science classes, (18.33) from foreign languages, only two participants (3.33%) were study economics and only one student from technical stream. This indicates that second-year students have different backgrounds and distinctive types of knowledge that has great influence on their level in writing in English and the way they deal with the different tasks and information given during the English course.

Item Three: For what reasons did you choose to study English? The results are shown in the below table.

Responses	Participants	Percentage
1. Personal.	8males/42females	83.33%
2. Imposed.	1male/9females	16.66%
Total	60	100%

Table 3: Students' reasons for choosing English.

The table indicates that almost all the participants (83.33%) have chosen to study English for personal goals, About a half of them did choose it because they like it, others claim that English is an international English which should be studied, only four particpants who have chosen to study English for finding a good job in the future. On the other hand, just a few number of the participants (16.66%) who were obliged to choose studying English, some of them stated that their parents were whom obliged them to study it.

 3.2. <u>**Section two**</u>**: Students' perceptions of writing**

<u>**Item One**</u>:" Is writing an interesting skill for you?" The results are shown in the below table.

Responses	Participants	Percentage
1. Yes	8Males _ 42 Females	83.33%
2. No	1 Male _ 9 Females	16.66%
Total	60	100%

Table 4: Students' interest in writing skill.

The table demonstrates that the majority of our participants (83.33%) are interested in writing skill. Our students prefer to write and seek to enhance their level in writing. The students' interest can be grown through many sources such as the teacher, the surrounding environment, or just a personal awareness.

The fewest number of the participants (16.66%) state that writing is not an interesting skill to them. The students' negative attitude towards writing is a very serious problem. Because writing is one of the main four basic skills which all EFL learners must master in learning the foreign language. The lack of interest in writing skill may cause a problem in obtaining the other skill. The following item, seeks to account for the reasons behind being interested or uninterested in writing skill.

The participants who answered with "**yes**" provide multiple answers, but they all have a mutual point. The majority of (25%) consider writing so interesting because it enables them to express their ideas. Some of them indicate that there are many things which they can freely express while they never can do orally. (20%) Of the participants consider writing as an important skill that should be mastered for developing their level in language learning. About (15%) think that writing is the most important skill which helps them in learning the language. While (8.33%) of the participants see that writing enables them to discover their mistakes and correct them, they also argue that it helps them to put grammatical rules into practice and learn new vocabulary. Only one participant (1.66%) claims that writing helps to develop the reading skill. Finally, the rest of the respondents (13.33%) provide no answer, they preferred to leave it empty for unknown reasons.

In favor of those who answered with **"No"** some abstained from giving their explanations, and others, however, gave some arguments. The majority of them (13.33%) confessed speaking skill is more important than writing, and not pleasurable like speaking where they can be freer. Others (3.33%) see that the process of writing is very difficult, and they feel afraid while practicing it. The following item is about exploring the students' fear of writing in English and the reasons behind that.

Item three: "Do you feel afraid when you write in English?" The results are shown in the below table.

Responses	Participants	Percentage
1. Yes	38 females/ 7 males	75 %
2. No	13females/ 2males	25%
Total	60	100%

Table 5: Ratio of students' fear of writing

This table demonstrates that the majority of the participants (75%) admit that they have

fear of writing in English. While the rest (25%) declared that they do not feel afraid to write in

English. Therefore, this fear towards writing is very serious and varied; teachers of writing

should be aware of its causes and try to get rid of them as much as possible. The following item

investigates the causes of students' fear from writing in English.

Item four: "If yes, is it because you" The results are shown in the below table.

Responses	Participants	Percentage
1. You worry about spelling mistakes	9females	20%
2. You do not have much vocabulary	8females	17.77%
3. You fear the teacher's negative	1male/6female	15.55%
4. All of the above	1male/11females	26.66%
1+2	1male/3females	8.88%
2+3	4females	8.88%
1+3	1male	2.22%
Total	45	100%

Table 6: Reasons for making students' fear writing

The table above shows the following: (15.55 %) among the participants who answer with

"**Yes**", they feel are afraid to write because of their teachers' negative feedback. Some of the

participants (17.77%) claim that they fear to write in English because they do not have much

vocabulary. These students, therefore, are discouraged by the lack of ideas. (20%) among those

participants attribute this fear to their worry about making spelling mistakes. This demonstrates

that these participants are greatly interested in the content of writing and think that it is very

important for making a perfect piece of writing. Finally, the majority of the participants (26.66%) reported that all of above factors prevented them from writing in English. This, in fact, is a strong one and can have severe effects on student writing achievement. The rest of the participants opted equally for two causes as indicated in table number (**7**).

In fact, the fear is not the only factor which stands as a barrier in front of the students. The role of the teacher is also very significant in students' psychology in the classroom. In the following question, we are going to discover how this role can be very important through students' views.

Item five: "What does your teacher do to create a good learning atmosphere in writing expression?" The results are shown in the below table.

Responses	Participants	Percentage
1. Praise students.	//////////	00%
2. Ask students to write different pieces of writing.	28females	46.66%
3. Encourages students to write and gives them feedback.	2males/11female	21.66%
4. Asks relevant questions.	2males/7females	16.66%
1+2	1male/2females	5%
1+3	1male	1.66%
2+3	1male/4females	8.33%
Total	60	100%

Table 7: Teachers' techniques for creating a good learning atmosphere in written expression

The table demonstrates that the most of the participants (46.66%) claim that their teacher tries to make a good learning atmosphere by asking them to write different pieces of writing for helping them to write in English and this diversity in writing motivated them for further writing.

(21.66%) indicated that their teachers always care whether they are comfortable with learning. They also encourage them to write they regularly provide them with feedback, which helps them to correct their mistakes, write better and feel more confident. This can also raise students' awareness about the importance of writing. Finally,(16.66%) of the participants stated that their teacher depends on reminding students of their capacities in a way of making them believe that they can do a lot of things to enhance their language learning, by asking them a set of relevant questions that guide them for better writing.

The table shows also that some teachers adopt more than one technique in order to create a good learning atmosphere. (5%) Participants claimed that the teacher depends on using two techniques the initial one and the second. While others (8.33%) stated that their teacher used both the first and the third technique, while only one student claims that the teacher applies the second and the last technique. Generally, it is so clear that the teachers are not using cooperative learning for managing the classroom in order to have a good learning atmosphere.

Table six: "How do you like to work in the writing class?" The results are shown in the below table.

Responses	Participants	Percentage
1. Individually.	4males/19females	38.33%
2. Pair works.	10females	16.66%
3. In groups.	5males/20female	41.66%
2+3	2females	3.33%
Total	60	100%

Table 8: Students' Opinions on the Way of Working on Writing Expression Session.

The table shows that the participants 'opinions are extremely different. The majority of them which resembles (41.66%) prefer to work in groups this refers to distinctive reasons as follows: Four participants among those who choose to work in groups, they see that working in groups is very helpful, three of them state that they like to work in groups because when they work together that gives them the opportunity to have their mistakes corrected by their peers. Others find that working in groups makes them feel more comfortable and increase their motivation to write more. While the rest which resembles the majority (about 25% from 41.66%) they stated that group work in written expression is an effective method which helps them a lot to develop their level in writing and facilitated the way they write.

The table also demonstrated that some of our participants (38.33%) like to work individually without the need to be engaged with others, they have stated some reasons, which made them choose to work alone, about eight of the participants claims that individual work enables them to depend on their own and correct their own mistakes by themselves without the dependency on others. Therefore, helps them to discover their real level. Four of them admit that they feel more comfortable when they work independently; others claim that they have the feeling of not belonging when they work in groups. The rest of the participants about six students preferred working independently for understanding themselves because writing is a personal issue, and being alone this helps them to concentrate better.

As the table indicates (16.66%) of the participants find it better to work in pairs in written expression for distinctive reasons. Some of them about seven students like to work in pairs because it helps them to share different ideas and discuss them with each other; it assists them more than group work. While others, about two participants admit that they feel more comfortable and confident when they work only with one college. The rest claimed that group

work was the source of noise and disagreement. Finally, there are a few numbers of the participants (3.33%) who choose more than one technique as the table above indicates because they see that share ideas and help each other in written expression.

Finally, we can say that the students like group work, and they prefer working in groups in writing class. Therefore, this indicates that the students are psychologically prepared to use the cooperative group work.

Item Seven: "What are the main methods used by your teacher to present the course of written expression? "

The respondents' answers were extremely different; their answers were as follows: Nine of them did not provide any answer for unknown reasons, while the others' answers are varied, most of them claim that their teacher of written expression explains the lesson, gives examples and after that helps them to practice it, while others reported that, their teacher applied the group work technique in teaching writing. About four of them claim that their teacher regularly divides them into pairs, groups and sometimes individually. Others stated that their teacher of written expression constantly writes the lesson on the blackboard then explains it and rarely when gives them the opportunity to practice and receive a feedback. About eight of our participants' answers were the same, they claimed that their teacher extensively gives them exercises in the classroom and also asks them to do homework. Some other participants described their teacher's method of teaching in writing as a drill, always explain the lesson then dictated it. Finally, according to the students' answers, we notice that the teachers of written expression are not applying the cooperative method in teaching writing.

To this point, the first section has enclosed some of our students' perceptions of writing, and also their teachers' concern with the learning context. In what follows is an attempt to

understand the students' attitudes towards the cooperative learning technique, and their reactions toward it.

 3.3. <u>**Section Three**</u> **Students' Attitudes Towards the Cooperative Learning**

<u>**Item One**</u>:" when the teacher asks you to work in groups, do you feel? The results are shown in the below table.

Responses	Participants	Percentage
1. Very motivated.	1males/10females	18.33%
2. Motivated.	4males/23females	45%
3. Less motivated.	2males/11females	21.66%
4. Not motivated.	9females	15%
Total	60	100%

Table 9: Students' reaction to group work

According to this table, the participants were asked how they feel when their teacher asks them to work in groups. As the results shown on the table, the students provided different responses; most of them (45%) admit that they feel motivated when they work with their peers. They find group work as the foundation of motivation because it helps them to discover other students' techniques of thinking and compare them to theirs. And also see that group work gives them the opportunity to share their ideas, and communicate with their peers, some of them did not provide a full answer, and they admitted that they like group work. About three participants see that when they work in groups that help them to develop their learning skills through the interaction with others and exchange of experiences and be able to finish the work in very short time. Finally, the rest, about five students, did not justify their answer for unknown reasons.

As the table indicates, the other participants' responses are varied between getting higher or less motivation, their responses were as follows: (21.33%) are less motivated, (18.33%) are very motivated, and only (15%) claim that they are not motivated at all. Those who are very motivated argued that when they discuss issues with their peers this enables them to create new ideas and freshen their mind; about five students see that group work increases their self-confidence, and helps them to correct their mistakes through the peer review. Because each group members support each other and higher, each one's the self-esteem.

The participants who claim that group work makes them feel less motivated, argues that group work is the source of noise and boredom. This is due to some group members who tend to hold the leadership of the group and do not give other students the opportunity to express their ideas and make contributions to the group. Therefore, this makes them fight with each other all time. Some of the participants do not like group work at all, and they prefer to work alone to feel more relaxed, the rest of the participants claimed that they cannot express their ideas in group work.

Finally, (15%) of the participants are not motivated at all because they hate working in groups, they prefer to work individually and isolated from the other which makes them feel more comfortable. They see that group work causes a loud noise in the classroom which makes them feel more anxious. Consequently, these results indicate that our students' attitudes towards group work are generally positive, which motivate them to learn. However, it should be noted that the degree of motivation can be affected by the way the teacher proceeds with this technique.

Item Two: "When you work in cooperative groups, does it help you?" the results are shown in the below table.

Responses	Participants	Percentage
1. To learn how to respect different ideas and opinions	2males/19females	35%
2. To learn social skills for getting along with others.	3females	5%
3. To understand the concepts better.	2males/8females	16.66%
4. To get the work completed.	2males/6females	13.33%
1+2	5females	8.33%
1+3	2males/3females	8.33%
1+4	4females	6.66%
3+4	1male/3female	5%
Total	60	100%

Table 10: The advantages of working in cooperative groups

The participants' responses are as follows: A huge number of the participants (35%) claim that they learn from cooperative work how to respect different ideas and opinions. Actually, cooperative work is purposes of motivating students to exchange ideas and opinions with each other. This would help them to know how to listen to the other peers and respect others' recommendations. (16.66%) of our participants state that cooperative group work teaches them how to understand the most ambiguous concepts, this can be achieved through peer assistance and group exchange of knowledge. (13.33%) of the respondents considered cooperative group work as beneficial techniques, which help them to finish the task in very short time, this due to the cooperation of each group member, each of has to do a part of the whole; therefore, the task is easier than before. Only a few numbers of our participants (5%) think that cooperative group work helps them to learn social skills. This means that our respondents are not aware how they should treat different personalities who can be grasped by interaction with peers. This result is very negative and has a serious impact on the students' future in society. The rest of the

participants as shown on the table choose more than one option, they think that working in cooperative groups can be so beneficial for more than one side.

Item Three: "When you work in groups, do you?" the results are shown in the below table.

Responses	Participants	Percentage
1. Feel that you are satisfied with yourself.	4males/15females	31.66%
2. Take a positive attitude towards yourself.	1male/7females	13.33%
3. Feel that you are not good at all.	1male/6females	11.66%
4. Feel more confident.	1male/16females	23.33%
1+4	1male/4females	8.33%
2+4	1male/3females	6.66%
Total	60	100%

Table 11: Students feeling when working in groups.

The table shows that most of our participants (31.66%) admitted that they feel satisfied with themselves when they are engaged in working in cooperative groups. The results also indicated that confidence is fairly raised in a quite high number of our participants (23.33%). Some other participants who present (13.33%) of the whole sample, have a positive attitude towards themselves when they work with their peers cooperatively. In effect, working together reveals the students' real level which would show to them that their level is not very far from that of their peers. This can encourage them one way or another. For sure, all students make mistakes and sharing the same thing can make them feel less embarrassed. Feeling of self-satisfaction indicates that these students contribute to the groups and are recognized by other peers. Others (11.66%) claim that cooperative learning does not make them feel good at all. Perhaps it is due to their relationships with others; it may also refer to groups they experienced working with which may have a negative impact on them made them avoid working in cooperative groups.

Some other participants chose more than one option as the table demonstrates. (8.33%) of them chose option number "**one**" and "**four**" which they may think that when they feel more satisfied with themselves that would increase their self-confidence, while others (6.66%) claim that cooperative learning raises their confidence, and therefore, that makes them have a positive attitude towards it. Generally, through the analysis, clearly almost all the students feel good when they work in cooperation with others; therefore, this indicates that they like cooperative learning.

Item Four: "How much did you learn from group work? "The results are shown in the below table.

Responses	Participants	Percentage
1-Very much	9 females /2 males	18.33%
2-Much	22 females /5 males	45%
3-Little	18 females /2 males	33.33%
4-Nothing	2 females	3.33%
Total	60	100%

Table 12: Amount of learning when working cooperatively

The participants' response was as follows: Most of the participants (45%) state that they learnt a lot through the use group work. This indicates that this way of learning helps our students much in their learning, and that they benefit from it with varying degrees. In this vein, we mention that (12.98%) learn very much. However, a significant number of our respondents (33.11%) admit that they learn a little, but only (3.24%) claim that they learn nothing from group work.

It can be said that group work is beneficial to many students and helps them learn new skills and motivate them for learning. However, some of them do not seem to learn from it for

one reason or another. In what follows is a general evaluation of this technique from students' points of view.

Item Five: What is your attitude toward using cooperative learning in writing expression?"

Responses	Participants	Percentage
1. Positive.	39 females/7Males	76.66%
2. Negative.	12 females /2 males	23.33%
Total	60	100%

Table 13: Students attitudes towards cooperative learning in written expression

The participants' responses were approximately different as the following; the majority of them (76.33) admit that they have a positive attitude towards applying cooperative learning in written expression, most of them like this technique and find it very helpful in understanding the given topics through peer discussion, which. Therefore, assists them to develop their writing level. And also helps them to have the task completed in short time with best quality of the touch of all group members. They see that cooperative learning enables them to have a better communication with other students with different backgrounds through the exchange of ideas. About thirteen of them did not justify their answer for unknown reasons.

As the table shows, (23.33%) of the participants their reaction toward cooperative learning was negative because most of them hate working in groups, they admit that groups are annoying and wasting of time, they also see that group work is created for weak rather than strong students, three of them stated that cooperative learning makes them feel less confident and confused. This refers to the way their teacher applies cooperative learning. He might forget how to guide those sensitive students. On the whole, through the analysis of the students' answers,

this indicates that the students have a positive attitude toward the cooperative learning in written expression.

Item Six: "Is it important to work together on a cooperative team?" the results are shown in the below table.

Responses	Participants	Percentage
1. Yes	7males / 35 females	70%
2. No	2males /16females	30%
Total	**60**	100%

Table 14: The importance of working in cooperative teams

The participants' responses indicate the following: (70%) of them choose to answer by "**Yes**"; it indicates that most of our participants care about using cooperative learning and they want to use it as a technique in learning writing. The rest of them (30%) answer with "**No**", they do not think that cooperative teams important at all. In the following Item, we will explore their reasons for that.

Item Seven: "Do you think that the teacher should imply cooperative learning in the writing class?" the results are shown in the below table.

Responses	Participants	Percentage
1. Yes	8males / 37 females	75%
2. No	1males /14females	25%
Total	60	100%

Table 15: Students' opinions on the application of cooperative learning in written expression

The results which are shown on the table indicate that almost all of our participants (75%) whom their answer was "**Yes**", they support the application of cooperative learning in written

expression class ,they have justified their answers as follows : They claim that cooperative learning helps them to fully understand the topic which they are going to write about, and also find very helpful in exchanging with others different concepts and ideas which contributes in developing their way of writing .Others stated that with use of cooperative learning ,the low achievers students will learn more through the support of high achievers .While some of them simply stated that cooperative learning method considered as the best one in teaching written expression .The rest of the participants, about twelve (26.66%) among whom answered by "**Yes**" did not justified their answers for unknown reasons .

As the table demonstrates about (25%) of the participants answer by **"No"** they see that cooperative learning is unsuccessful method and they considered it as the source of noise. Some of them admitted that they prefer individual work more than cooperative groups, they claim that working in groups would be just a waste of time, one of the participants stated that when one works in groups, feels like if the other peers obliged him to follow their instructions .We can say that this kind of behavior rarely when found, only when the students does not chose the appropriate group .Finally, only three participants preferred to leave the no answer to the question for unknown reasons.

Generally, through the analysis of the students' answers, it is quite clear that the students are highly motivated to use cooperative learning, they think that the application of cooperative learning would be helpful in the writing class; therefore, this means that the students have a positive attitude towards this technique.

Conclusion

This chapter has mainly shed light on students' attitudes and perceptions of teachers' use of cooperative learning to teach writing. The obtained results would help us to provide a list of suggestions and recommendations for students and teachers of written expression in order to use cooperative learning technique in an effective way that would motivate students to get rid of almost all their difficulties in learning writing. As it has already been mentioned through the analysis of students' questionnaire, writing was found as an interesting to the majority of the students (83.33%).However, most of them (75%) feel afraid to write for many reasons of which the fear of making spelling mistakes constitute the outstanding obstacle to them. Moreover, most teachers do not really consider the learning atmosphere. As regards students' preferences for working in class, group work seems to be preferable to a great number of them (63.64%), and they said that they hope the teacher would give them the opportunity to choose with whom to work. But regarding some issues related to the functioning of group work, like teaching students some skills of group work and raising their awareness towards them, the results were rather negative, that is to say, our teachers neglect the necessary elements for cooperative group work, and they do not tell their students about the advantages of cooperative learning. In general, only some students encounter some problems when working in groups. However, only a small number of our teachers try to solve these problems. Finally, students' reactions to cooperative learning are positive on the whole and confirm most of what was found in the literature. Therefore, along the analysis of our questionnaire results, we found out that the students have positive attitudes towards the cooperative learning; therefore, it is clearly apparent that our hypothesis has been proved.

<div align="center">**Teachers' Interview/ Results and Analysis**</div>

Introduction

This chapter deals with the analysis of the results obtained from the teachers' interview. The participants were asked to answer twelve open-ended questions to elicit specific information of their perception of the writing, this process aims also at investigating teachers' forms of teaching the writing skill, and their attitudes towards cooperative learning .The responses to the open - ended questions of the interview and their corresponding analysis will be presented in turns.

1. Type of the Interview

Broadly speaking, an interview can be described as, "the elicitation of data by one person from another through person-to- person encounters" (Nunan, 1992, p.231). However, interviews come in many different forms, they range from unstructured, semi-structured to structured interviews. The choice of a given type is determined by the nature of the research and the degree of control the interviewer wishes to exert (Ibid). The structured interview consists of a list of set questions in a predetermined order prepared previously by the researcher.

In this study, the researcher has opted for a structured interview, as data gathering tools. One of the main advantages of a structured interview is that gives the interviewer a degree of power and control over the course of the interview. Besides, misunderstanding, or lack of understanding, can be immediately sorted out during the exchange of information (Nunan, 1992).

2. Aim of the Interview

The main aim of the interview was to provide the researcher with in-depth understanding of the teachers' perceptions of the writing process, and their attitudes towards cooperative learning.

The interview served also as a way to validate the students' answers previously stated in the questionnaire.

The combination of a questionnaire and interview can help the two tools complement each other and enhance the possibility of obtaining both quantitative and qualitative data. Questionnaires and interviews are thus often used in complementary fashion. Questionnaires may be followed up for in –depth interviews, so that ideas may be explored more thoroughly (Nunan, 1992).

3. Interview Procedure

The interview was piloted with two English teachers before conducting it with the whole population the reason behind this is to have an idea about how long it will take. The interview was conducted during the period from the ninth to the tenth, April 2013. In the teachers' room at Biskra university. Each interview took an average of 20 minutes teachers were free to speak their minds, they were also free to use French or Arabic in case they felt "out of words" in English.

During the interview, both the researcher and the respondents had the opportunity to ask for further information so as to ensure a full understanding and clear description. The fact of using a structured interview helped the researcher in taking notes. This was just as filling in a questionnaire.

4. Description of the Interview

A total of five teachers was asked to answer twelve open-ended questions related to their perception of the writing process, and their attitudes towards cooperative e learning .The interview was conducted with only five teachers because The other teachers had apologized for not taking part in the interview due to personal reasons. The interview questions are divided into three sections.

4.1. Section One:

Question One, *"What is the type of your qualification?"*

This question was asked to determine the efficiency associated with the scientific level of the teachers.

Question Two*, "How long have you been teaching English and written expression in particular?"*

This question is posed to know about the teachers' experience because it helps to provide different opinions which based on their experiences in the field of writing.

4.2. Section Two:

Question Three, *"How do you describe your students' level in writing? Why"*

It was asked to ensure what have been stated in that the statement of the problem which indicates that the students have difficulties that deprives them from achieving in writing.

Question Four, *"What are the main difficulties that face your students in writing? Why? "*

It was employed to know the rate of the essential writing difficulties that face students according to the teachers' evaluation.

Question Five, "*What methodologies do you use in teaching writing*? Why?"

This question was asked in order to know if the teachers are applying cooperative learning in their writing class.

Question Six*, "Do you think that students working together are better than working alone in writing class? Why?*

This question intended to attract the teachers' attention in order to find out their opinions about the appropriate technique for teaching writing, and also helps to solve the students' problems in writing.

4.3. Section Three

Question Seven, "*What do you know about cooperative learning?*"

This question was asked to know if the teachers know the difference between the group work and cooperative learning as stated in the theoretical framework.

Question Eight, *"Do you think that cooperative learning increases students' learning achievement? How?"*

This question is made for knowing the teachers' attitudes towards using cooperative learning techniques for best achievement in students' learning.

Question Nine, *"What are the major benefits of using cooperative learning in writing class? How?"*

This one was asked to know if the teachers believe that cooperative learning will be a successful technique which can provide many benefits, the answers to this question would be based on the teachers' experience.

Question Ten, *"Do you use cooperative learning to teach writing? Why?"*

This question aims at identifying whether the teachers are incorporating the cooperative learning or not.

Question Eleven, *"How many times do you use cooperative learning in teaching writing? Why?"*

This question is indented to know how much the teachers are motivated to use the cooperative learning, and how much they like working with it.

Question Twelve, *"What are the main cooperative learning structures you employ in your class?"*

This question was asked to know if the teachers are applying the cooperative learning with an awareness of its theoretical background, or just using it in a random way.

5. Analysis of Teachers' Responses

5.1. Section One

Question One, *"What is the type of your qualification?"*

There are two respondents who have Magister degree, while the other three respondents have license degrees.

Question Two, *"How long have you been teaching English and written expression in particular?"*

The respondents have different experiences in teaching English and specifically written expression, their answers were as follows:

One of teachers teaches English for seven years, and written expression for two years.

Another one stated "I have been teaching English for four years, and two years for written expression".

Another two teachers approximately have the same period of teaching "two years in teaching English, and written expression".

On the whole, teachers with different experiences will share with us their expressions in teaching.

Question Three, *"How do you describe your students' level in writing? Why"*

When the respondents were asked about their students' level in writing, most of the respondents admitted that their students' level in writing is between poor and average .Others stated that their students have a low level in writing.

One teacher says, "Average to some extent."

Other teacher shares the same opinion, "average".

Another teacher stated, "Average, as far as the second year students are concerned, they are not aware enough of the rules of writing even if they study punctuation, and they know the rules, but they do not respect them".

Another teacher says, "The students' level is low, not quite good, because they luck vocabulary, have many difficulties in grammar "

On the other hand, teachers find that the students 'level is low, and produce poor pieces of writing.

The other two respondents' answer were approximately the same , they stated that their students ' level in writing is very poor and they do not respect the rules of grammar, as one of the teachers said, "They are beginners and their level is not quite good , they have a lack of vocabulary and many difficulties in grammar"

On the whole, the respondents' answers demonstrate that teachers evaluate the students' level between low and average due to different difficulties which will be discussed in the following item analysis.

Question Four, *"What are the main difficulties that face your students in writing? Why?"*

Generally, the teachers' responses to this question reveal that students have difficulties in writing, and show also demonstrates that the teachers are aware of their students' difficulties in writing .

One of the teachers says, "[the students] They have problems with coherence and grammatical structures. Because no implication, no practice, and no use of writing rules "
Another one says "They have poor vocabulary, faulty grammar, poor style, and lack of ideas "

Another teacher shares the same answer "poor vocabulary, no respect of grammatical rules, poor style, and lack of ideas "

Another teacher says, "The main difficulties they encounter are in presenting ideas and expressing them in a well correct language, their style is very poor, no much vocabulary "

Another teacher only says "they have difficulty in finding the ideas they write with "

According to the respondents' answers, the students have difficulties in writing.

Question Five, *"What methodologies do you use in teaching writing ?Why?"*

The responses given by the teachers allowed us to know if the teachers are applying the cooperative method in teaching writing or using other methods.

One of teachers says," I use communicative approach ".

Another one says, "I use the eclectic method, it is based mainly on the communicative approach".

One other teacher believes that the eclectic proved to be the most significant method in teaching students writing.

Another one says, "The Contrastive Rhetoric approach helps in teaching writing "

Another teacher thinks that the "Task based approach" as the best teaching writing method which helps students to apply the theoretical rules into real pieces of writing.

On the whole, the answers demonstrate that the teachers do not apply the cooperative learning method in teaching writing, they use different other methods in teaching writing for many reasons.

Question Six, *"Do you think that students working together are better than working alone in writing class? Why?"*

The answers of the respondents were among those who think that group work is better than individual work, while others believe that when students work alone achieve better in writing .

One of the teachers says "yes, but sometimes".

The other one shares the same answer "yes, sometimes"

Another one sees that group work is better than individual work because it motivates them to write.

On the other hand, one teacher says, "working alone is better than group work".

One of the teachers stated that both the group work and the individual work are very important in writing class because sometimes you find those who like to work in groups while there other students who like to work alone.

On the whole, accruing to the respondents' answers, almost all of them argue that the students who work together are better than those who work alone; therefore, we can realize that teachers believe that group work can solve the students' problems in writing as what the stated in question number four.

Question Seven, *"What do you know about cooperative learning?"*

Generally, the respondents' answers were almost the same, they stated that cooperative learning is when students work together. One of the them says, "cooperative learning is when the students work together", according to their answers, the teachers do not know much about what cooperative learning really is .They think that cooperative learning when students work in groups .So, our teachers do not make the difference between group work and cooperative learning as stated in the literature review of this work .Since the teachers have no knowledge about the theoretical background of the cooperative learning , their application of it would has no effective results .

Question Eight, *"Do you think that cooperative learning increases students' learning achievement? How?"*

The responses to this question are varied according to each respondent, their answers were divided between who think that cooperative learning can increase the students learning achievement, and those who think the opposite.

One teacher says, "Yes, it [CL] encourages students' interaction, improves the sense of competition in which students help each other, and exchange ideas. It reduces anxiety and shyness".

Another one says, "Of course, yes .They [the students] exchange knowledge with each other ".

Another teacher says, "It all depends on the way they [the students] work and share information, if the group is well structured, the students will achieve more ".

Another teacher claims Cooperative learning can help students in their learning achievement, but only to some extent.

On the other hand, one of teachers sees that cooperative learning can not increase the students learning achievement, while individual work makes them achieve more.

In general, according to the respondents' answers, even though, they have no much knowledge about the theoretical part of the cooperative learning technique and how can be applied, as have been discovered in the previous question, they believe that cooperative learning helps students to develop their learning skills.

Question Nine, *"What are the major benefits of using cooperative learning in writing class? How?"*

The respondents' responses were approximately the same; they all think that the use cooperative learning in writing class has many benefits .Each of them expresses those major benefits in different ways.

One of the teachers says, "They ameliorate their performance by motivating each other, and exchange ideas".

Another teacher almost shares the same answer, he reported that cooperative learning helps students to exchange ideas with each other, and considered as the source of motivation which increases also the sense of competition between students.

Another one says, "It reduces stress and competition, the students are responsible for their work and progress ".

Another teacher thinks that cooperative learning helps students to acquire new vocabulary, and CL motivates students through engaging them in writing process.

Another one says, "CL improves positive competition, self confidence, and overcome shyness .And also reduces students' anxiety as well as improves students' interaction".

On the whole, the teachers' responses demonstrate that almost all of them agree that cooperative learning has benefits which help students in developing different skills, so the teachers believe that cooperative learning is a helpful method in teaching writing.

Question Ten, *"Do you use cooperative learning to teach writing? Why?"*

The responses to this question were divided between those who use it, and those who do not use it.

Some of the respondents use cooperative learning in teaching writing because they think that it helps them to engage the students with each other and motivates them to write.

Others they claimed that they employ it, but sometime according to the topic of writing.

On the other hand, only one teacher does not apply it in teaching writing.

On the whole, the answers demonstrate that the teachers are applying cooperative learning. Although they believe that CL has many benefits, they do not apply in regular way .In

fact, cooperative learning has to be carefully planned and smartly used in order to have positive results. They should pay more careful attention to it; CL should be part of the lesson not only an occasional method.

Question Eleven, *"How many times do you use cooperative learning in teaching writing? Why?"*

Almost all of the respondents use cooperative learning from time to time, there are those who use it teach how to write a paragraph, others think that it should be applied in some certain topics

One of the teachers says, "I use it whenever possible "

On the other hand, one of the teachers does not use it.

Generally, the teachers are using cooperative learning, but they do not depend on it as the basic method of teaching writing .As has been stated in the theoretical background of the dissertation, cooperative learning should be frequently used in order to have effective results.

Question Twelve, *"What are the main cooperative learning structures you employ in your class?"*

Without any surprise, almost unanimously, the respondents declared not using any cooperative structures; they do not even know what the cooperative structures are. This due to their ignorance of the theoretical background of the cooperative learning .Without the application of the main cooperative learning structures, there will be no effective results. "The lack of incorporating these elements means that cooperation cannot be effectively carried out" (Jolliffe, 2007; Johnson, Johnson &Smith, 1998) .As have been stated in the literature review.

6. Discussion of the Findings

The teachers' interview was conducted with two main aims:

Firstly, to get deeper insight into the teachers' perceptions of the writing process, and their attitudes towards cooperative learning .

Secondly, to complement and confirm the results stated previously in the questionnaire.

The analysis of the responses to the interview, supplied by teachers of English at Biskra university allowed to draw certain conclusions:

- Through the analyses of the teachers' responses, it is clear that the students have difficulties in writing as it has been stated in the statement of the problem.

- Teachers have a positive attitude towards group work in the written class; therefore, they believe that group work helps students to solve their problems in writing.

- Through the analyses of the teachers' responses, it was found that they do not apply the cooperative learning method due to their lack of its theoretical background. Consequently, without having sufficient knowledge of the theoretical background of the cooperative learning, there will be no effectual results that help the students to develop their writing.

-Although the teachers do not know very much about cooperative learning, according to the analyses of their answers, they believe that cooperative learning has many advantages that help the students to achieve more in writing. So, the teachers have a positive attitude towards using cooperative learning.

Finally, according to the analysis of the answers, we found out that the teachers do not employ the real cooperative structure that is due to their ignorance of its theoretical background.

Conclusion

To conclude this chapter, two points worth mentioning; first the interview fulfilled its aim of providing further insight into teachers' views about the their perception of

writing , and their attitudes towards cooperative learning . Their responses complemented the ones obtained via the students' questionnaire. Second, teachers revealed that cooperative learning is a helpful technique in teaching writing. Consequently, a confirmation of the hypotheses is obtained via teachers' responses. The teachers' standpoints towards the use of CL in EFL classes confirm positive attitudes that state encouragement to adopt it as it helps the learner to share the learning with other peers as well as   ideas and develop social skills. In this paradigm, our participants confirm the first hypothesis through their opinions within the interview and through experience in their field.

According to the teachers' responses, our teachers have positive attitudes towards the use of CL in their classes, but they lack a sufficient knowledge about this latter structures (they have poor implementation) this may lead to the students failure to achieve the desired level when writing.

General Conclusion

This study aims at studying the correlation between well-structured cooperative learning and students' writing achievement in second year English students at the Department of Foreign Languages at University of Biskra. To examine this co-relation, we provided three hypotheses: in the first one we have hypothesized that the use the cooperative learning in EFL class will help learners to enhance their writing. Second one is if EFL teachers have positive attitudes towards using cooperative learning and become aware of its structures, students will develop their writing skill. The last one is, if learners' attitudes are positive towards cooperative learning, the students' writing skills will be improved.

In the light of investigating these three hypotheses, we begun by the section of literature review which contained two chapters. The first chapter presented some of the theoretical issues related to the nature of writing , through this chapter we find out that writing is a very complex and difficult skill .However, it is very important to master the writing skill in language learning which needs more careful attention from the learner's and teacher's part .

The second chapter provided a better understanding of the cooperative learning technique and its underlying elements .Along this chapter, we discovered that cooperative learning stimulates students to acquire the knowledge as well as interpersonal and team skills. It makes them feel more confident to write because they could share their ideas and will not much worried about the mistakes. Cooperative learning is a beneficial method which facilitates the process of learning by creating a good learning atmosphere which motivated the students to achieve more.

The second section of this study is devoted to the practical study which is divided into two parts: The analysis of the students' questionnaire, and the analysis of the teachers' interview.

The students ' questionnaires and teachers' interview helped us to present some pedagogical suggestion and recommendations. We concluded this section by confirming the given hypotheses. Through the analysis of the students' questionnaire, we found out the students had positive attitudes towards the cooperative learning; therefore, this is what confirmed our hypothesis that concerns the students' attitudes towards the cooperative learning. .Throughout the analysis of the teachers' interview, we found out that the teachers have a positive attitude towards the use of cooperative learning. However, they do not apply correctly which its main structures (strategies).They do not have a sufficient awareness of its theoretical background, this is what deprives them from having effective results and leads to bad implementation.

This study to some extent has confirmed some benefits of cooperative learning technique on many sides. In addition, it gives an overview of how this way of learning is applied by teachers of written expression in the department of English at the University of Biskra. As a conclusion, we can say that this work considered as a starting point to other researchers and studies about CL which is a form of teaching that is rather recent, but its implementation in academic contexts is getting higher and higher. Actually, CL has several structures which effects this study, we did not investigate all of them .It requires other researches to devote their time to investigate them. This study is helpful for teachers with different interests and especially those who teach the language skills.

Suggestions and Recommendations

In the light of the findings and conclusions of the present study, some recommendations are suggested for both teachers and students to remove the confusion that is common about the cooperative learning, as stated in the literature review that is not all group works are cooperative for that reason we suggested the following recommendations:

Teacher should devote an ample time for helping student to get used to the cooperative learning through using the small-groups technique form time to time just a part of the lesson. Cooperative learning strategies should be used in teaching writing in the different educational stages to enhance students' abilities in writing. The role of the teacher also should be changed from being the main source of teaching process to that of facilitating, guiding, managing and encouraging. It is highly recommended that students of faculties of education should be trained systematically in how to use cooperative learning strategies in teaching English as a foreign language.

Moreover, the teachers of writing should use cooperative learning strategy in their daily teaching to add variety and avoid the monotony of teaching. Teachers of English should develop their students' writing skills by giving them enough time to interact with each other freely. During the teaching of writing or writing communication, students should be provided with a relaxing, effective, and interactive environment that fosters interaction and helps to develop the students' writing skills.

Limitation of the study

The results and discussion indicated that our hypotheses which are supported; that is to say, that using cooperative learning in writing class would help students to develop their wring achievement . Nevertheless, this study has some limitations.

The first limitation is time constraints. Longer time would help us to use different tools and a larger sample of students and a population or a sample of teachers who teach second year English writing at the Department of English at the University of Biskra 2012-2013. This would

present our results in very distinctive dimension. If we had an ample time that would also allow us to broaden our research through analyzing the phenomena in depth.

The experimental method of research would be more helpful for the quantitative results than the descriptive one because it provides more reliable and valid outcomes, in the other hand, the questionnaire in which sometimes the answers may not reflect the students' real opinion or answer. Another limitation is the number of sample.

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APPENDICES

Students' Questionnaire

Dear student, you are requested to fill in this questionnaire to express your attitudes towards the use of cooperative learning. Your answers are very important for the validity of this research we are undertaking.

" Cooperative learning is a teaching approach in which students work cooperatively in small teams with individuals of different talents, abilities and background to complete a common goal".

Please read the following questions carefully and place a (√) in the box that corresponds with the answers' choice.

<u>Section One:</u> Background Information

a) Gender :

1- Female ☐

2- Male ☐

b) Your BAC streaming:

…………….. ……………………………………………………………………….

c) Why did you choose to study English?

1-Personal

2-Imposed

Please justify your answer:

……………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………

Section Two: **Students' Perceptions of the writing skill**

a) Is writing an interesting skill to you?

   1- Yes   ☐

   2- No   ☐

b) Please explain why?

…………………………………………………………………………………...
…………………………………………………………………………………...
…………………………………………………………………………………...

c) Do you feel afraid when you write in English?

   1- Yes   ☐

   2- No   ☐

d) If yes, is it because:

   1- You worry about spelling mistakes   ☐

   2- You do not have much vocabulary   ☐

   3- You fear the teachers' negative feedback   ☐

   4- All of the above   ☐

e) What does your teacher do to create a good learning atmosphere in written expression?

   1- Praise students.   ☐

   2- Ask students to write different pieces of writing.   ☐

   3- Encourages students to write and gives them feedback.   ☐

   4- Asks relevant questions.   ☐

f) How do you like to work in the writing class.?

   1-Indivdually   ☐

   2-Pair work   ☐

   3-In groups   ☐

And justify you answer:

…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………..

g) What are the main methods used by your teacher to present the course of written expression?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………

<u>Section Three:</u> Students' Attitudes towards Cooperative learning

a) When the teacher asks you to work in groups, do you feel?

    1- Very motivated   ☐

    2- Motivated   ☐

    3- Less motivated   ☐

    4- Not motivated   ☐

In any case, please say why?

……………………………………………………………………………………..
……………………………………………………………………………………..
……………………………………………………………………………………..

b) When you work in cooperative group, does it help you?

    1- To learn how to respect diffrent ideas and opinions. ☐

    2- To learn social skills for getting along with others. ☐

    3- To understand the concepts better. ☐

    4- To get the work completed on time. ☐

c) When you work in groups , do you:

      1- Feel that you are satisfied with yooureself .   □

      2- Take a postive attitude twoards yourself .   □

      3- Feel that you are not good at all .   □

      4- Feel more confident .   □

d) How much do you learn from cooperative group work?

1-Very much

2-Much

3-Little

4-Nothing

e) What is your attitude towards using cooperative learning in written expression?

1. Positive   □

2. Negative   □

    Please explain why in both cases:

…………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………

f) Is it important to work together on a cooperative team?

    1- Yes □

    2- no □

g) Do you think that the teacher should imply cooperative learning in writing class?

    1- Yes   □

    2- No   □

Whatever your answer is, please justify?

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Thank you.

Teachers' Interview

We would be so grateful if you could answer the following questions about your opinions concerning teaching writing and your attitudes concerning the use of cooperative learning technique in teaching writing. Your answer will be very helpful for the research project we are undertaking.

Please answer the following questions:

1. What is the type of your qualification?

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2. How long have you been teaching English and written expression in particular?

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<u>Section One:</u> Teachers' perceptions of writing process

1. How do you describe your students' level in writing? Why?

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2-What are the main difficulties that face your students in writing? Why?

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3- What methodologies do you use in teaching writing? Why?

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4. Do you think that students working together are better than working alone in writing class? Why?

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Section Two: Attitudes towards cooperative learning

1. What do you know about cooperative learning?

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2. Do you think that cooperative learning increases students' learning achievement? How?

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3. What are the major benefits of using cooperative learning in writing class? How?

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4. Do you use cooperative learning to teach writing? Why?

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5. How many times do you use cooperative learning in teaching writing? Why?

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6. What are the main cooperative learning structures you employ in your class?

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Thank you