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**Cooperative Learning Technique as a Motivational Factor in
Promoting Foreign Language Learners 'Oral Performance**

**Case study: second year students of English at the University of Mohamed Kheider
Biskra**

**A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Foreign Languages in Partial
Requirement for the Fulfillment of Master Degree in Sciences of Language**

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Dedication

I wish to dedicate this work to all my family

To my dearest person in this world,

My mother who devoted her life to my education

My father who taught me how to rely on myself

I also dedicate it, to my brothers and sisters

Special thanks are due to all my friends for their patience, and moral support

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Abstract

Speaking is considered to be the most important language skill that must be mastered by language learners. Therefore, teachers have to focus on developing their students' speaking skill by adopting different techniques and methods in the classroom. The cooperative learning technique is one of those techniques through which the students of English can easily get involved in the classroom to improve their oral performance. Moreover, we believe that students' failure or poor speaking skill is due to the old methods and techniques adopted in teaching this skill. Therefore, the present study aims at showing the effectiveness of cooperative learning as a teaching technique to develop FL learners' oral proficiency. The present dissertation is an attempt to highlight the importance of making small groups to maximize learner-learner interaction via cooperative learning. As a matter of fact, throughout this study we hypothesize that if we appropriately implement cooperative learning technique, learners' oral performance will be improved. In order to test our hypothesis we adopted a qualitative method. This study is based on two questionnaires administered to second year license students of English at the University of Mohamed Kheider Biskra. Also, the questionnaire is directed to teachers of Oral Expression. The analysis of the questionnaires showed that both teachers and learners support cooperative learning technique as a teaching strategy in enhancing learners' speaking ability. Thus, our hypothesis is confirmed.

List of Abbreviations

CL: Cooperative Learning

CLL: Cooperative Language Learning

EFL: English as Foreign Language

ELLs: English Language Learners

FL: Foreign Language

GI: Group Investigation

LMD: License / Master / Doctorate

Q: Question

SL: Second Language

STAD: Student Teams-Achievement Division

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ملخص

General Introduction

Teaching is a challenging but very rewarding profession, with teachers play an essential part in helping learners to acquire and develop the knowledge and skills they will need in their later life; in which they will learn how to express their own views and opinions, and to improve their oral fluency and accuracy which are very essential for the success of FL communication. Teachers should also vary techniques and strategies to promote their students' oral proficiency. Cooperative learning then, is necessary and useful as an educational technique to enhance learning as well as to enhance the learners' speaking skill.

The concept of Cooperative Language Learning plays a significant role in the process of second language learning. The purpose of language learning then, is to develop the speakers' four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing with the base of large vocabulary and good grammar, but in this case the most important language skill that is more useful between the teacher and the learners while interacting with each other is the speaking skill.

As far as the speaking skill is concerned, we will try to shed some light on this skill which is considered to be the most important language skill to be mastered by the majority of SL learners. Therefore, it is necessary to make use of various strategies and techniques that will help learners to participate in the classroom. Cooperative learning which is the focus of this study is one of those techniques through which learners can improve their oral performance. Teachers then, must involve all the learners in cooperative learning activities; also they must apply some of the teaching strategies to make all of the students talk.

1. Significance of the Study

Speaking is one of the most important language skills that must be developed by EFL learners. It is considered as the core of any language teaching which can be used in order to measure the learners' mastery of language. Therefore, teachers have to focus more on developing their students' speaking skill by applying different techniques and strategies. The use of cooperative language learning is one of those techniques that can help the teacher to engage his students in the classroom interaction, and that gives second year English students the opportunity to participate in the classroom. That is to say, the most significant role of the teacher is to make his students speak the language well.

2. Aims of the Study

The present study aims to explore the effects of cooperative learning on developing learners' oral proficiency. This research is concerned with making use of small group to maximize learners' oral production via cooperative language learning technique. In addition to that, it aims at investigating how cooperative learning can be useful in developing second year LMD students' speaking skill in the department of English. In other words, to show the close links between cooperative learning and improving EFL learners' oral proficiency. Knowing the effectiveness of students cooperating with each other, we found that doing a research about something very important can help us to achieve the following objectives:

1. To find out the best strategies to encourage students to cooperate with each other in the language classroom.
2. Make teachers use cooperative learning technique in the classroom.
3. Give an account of the strategies related to cooperative learning that can develop EFL learners' speaking ability.

3. Statement of the Problem

The main objective of learning a foreign language is to be able to communicate in that language. Yet, we have noticed that EFL learners have difficulties in communicating in English; they do not use English much more in the classrooms. We think that their failure in speaking the foreign language is due to the old methods that are followed in teaching the speaking skill. This study aims to find the most appropriate ways or methods through which EFL learners can have more opportunities to develop their speaking performance. Thus; Cooperative learning technique is one of those effective ways to engage the students in the classroom communication.

4. Research Questions

This research attempts to answer the following questions:

1. Do teachers of Oral Expression implement Cooperative Language Learning technique in the classroom?
2. What are the learners' attitudes towards this particular technique?
3. Why do learners fail in speaking the foreign language?

4. Does cooperative learning technique play a motivational role in enhancing students' speaking skill?

5. Research Hypothesis

The hypothesis that we will attempt to verify along this study is the following:
We hypothesize that if we appropriately implement cooperative learning technique, EFL learners' speaking skill will be improved.

6. Research Methodology

The research methodology that we are going to adopt along this study is a descriptive one. This research will be conducted qualitatively through a questionnaire that will be administered to a sample of second year LMD students of English (50 students) at Biskra University. This sample is selected randomly, and we believe that it represents the whole population. It aims at investigating the students' attitudes towards speaking the FL. We will also administer the questionnaire to the group of teachers (5 teachers) of Oral Expression at the department of English because of their experience about students and their observation of learners' oral performance in the classroom.

7. Structure of the Dissertation

The present dissertation consists of three main chapters. The first two chapters contain the literature review. Chapter one represents an overview of Cooperative Language Learning, its definition; comparing cooperative learning with group work and collaborative learning. The main focus of this chapter is on its main types and elements, in addition to that, mentioning both the teacher's and learner's role. Finally, we will discuss some of the benefits and methods of cooperative learning.

In the second chapter, we will deal with general issues about the speaking skill; the nature of speaking, definitions, and the relationship between speaking and listening. Then, we will mention the basic elements, types, and some of the characteristics of speaking ability. In addition to that, some activities and strategies of speaking will be discussed. Finally, we will finish this chapter with its various functions as well as the teacher's role is concerned.

The last chapter deals with findings and data analysis. It provides a detailed analysis of both teachers' and students' questionnaire.

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Chapter One

Introducing Cooperative Language Learning

Introduction

Cooperative language learning (CLL) is one of the most instructional methods through which students interact with each other to acquire knowledge and skills and to achieve common learning goals. It is an approach to teaching that makes maximum use of cooperative activities involving pairs and small groups of learners in the classroom (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

In this chapter, we will deal with general issues about cooperative learning; general historical overview about CL and its main types. Then, the focus will be on the difference between collaborative learning and cooperative learning, and finally cooperative language learning methods.

1. History of Cooperative Learning

Cooperative learning (CL) is not a new fad. It is an old idea. Olsen and Kagan (1992 cited in Johnson et al., 1991) state that its main roots have been traced back to the Talmud. It manifested in England in the late 18th century schools of Joseph Lancaster and Andrew Bell, and in the U.S. in 1806 when a Lancastrian school opened. Within the common school movement in the United States in the early 1800s there was a strong emphasis on cooperative learning. At certain periods, CL has strong advocates and used to improve the educational goals. One of the most successful advocates of cooperative learning in the United States was Colonel Francis Parker.

In the last three decades of the 19th century, Colonel Parker brought to his advocacy of cooperative learning enthusiasm, idealism, democracy, and individuality in the public schools. His success rested to create a cooperative democratic classroom atmosphere. Parker's instructional methods of cooperation among students dominated American education at the turn of the century. Following Parker, John Dewey (1916) promoted the use of cooperative learning groups as part of his famous project method in instruction (cited in Johnson et al., 1991: 4-5).

During the 1940s and 1950s, the interest was focused on competitive learning (Kluge et al, 1999 cited in Kluge, 1999). The authors began their work on cooperative learning in the late of 1960s, and in the late of 1970s, David DeVries and Keith Edwards began work on cooperative learning at the Johns Hopkins University's Center for social organization of schools. In the 1980s, schools again began to use cooperative learning.

2. Definitions of Cooperative Learning

There is a difference between having students work in a group and structuring groups of students to work cooperatively. For this to have a cooperative learning situation there needs to be a common goal on which the group is rewarded for its efforts. A cooperative group should have a sense of individual accountability in which all students have to know the material for the whole group to be successful. Cooperation then, is a type of interaction in which students are 'positively interdependent', which will result according to Johnson and Johnson (1995:19) "in an emotional bonding with collaborators liking each other, wanting to help each other succeed, and being committed to each other's well-being" (qtd. in Dörnyei and Murphey, 2003: 22). Student's collaboration can be successfully developed including different tasks such as role-play performance, problem-solving activities, and preparing group reports in which students work together to achieve a common goal that requires the preparation of a single 'group product'.

Group work is also relevant to educational contexts because the class group can have a significant impact on the effectiveness of learning. A successful group work is a vital element in the teaching / learning processes. Brown (2000: 3 cited in Dörnyei and Murphey, 2003: 13) has offered the following definition of a group: "a group exists when two or more people define themselves as members of it and when its existence is recognized by at least one another." In other words, a group qualifies as a 'group' when it has become a psychological reality for insiders and outsiders alike.

Johnson, Johnson, and Smith (1991) define cooperative learning as "the instructional use of small groups so that students work together to maximize their own learning and each other's learning" (qtd. in Jones & Jones, 2008: 65).

Brown (2001: 47) states that in cooperative learning, students are "a team whose players must work together in order to achieve goals successfully". According to Sharan (1980: 242), cooperative learning is a set of instructional strategies "which employs small

teams of pupils to promote peer interaction and cooperation for studying academic subjects” (qtd. in Robinson, 1991: 6). For Slavin (1996: 43), this approach has been “one of the greatest success stories in the history of educational research” (qtd. in Dörnyei, 2001: 100). Slavin (1995: 2) has identified cooperative learning (CL) as the, “variety of teaching methods in which students work in small groups to help one another learn academic content”. In other words, CL includes different instructional techniques through which students can interact with each other to achieve common learning goals.

CLL has been defined by many researchers. One definition of CLL is that:

Cooperative learning is group learning activity organized so that learning is 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 is motivated to increase the learning of others (Olsen & Kagan cited in Richards & Rodgers, 2001: 192).

Thus cooperative learning is a teaching method that is well-structured in order to accomplish a shared learning goal based on the knowledge that exists among the group members. So, cooperation is learning together to achieve common goals.

3. Cooperative Learning versus Group Work

There is a difference between simply having students work in a group and structuring groups of students to work cooperatively. A group of students sitting at the same table doing their own work, but free to talk with each other as they work, is not structured to be a cooperative group, as there is no positive interdependence. It could be called individualistic learning with talking. A cooperative group has to be structured and managed by the teacher or the professor. For this to be a cooperative learning situation, there must be an accepted shared goal on which the group is rewarded for its efforts. If a group of students has been assigned to do a report, but only one student does all the work and the others just go along for a free ride, it is not a cooperative group. A cooperative group work should have a sense of individual accountability which means that all students need to know the material for the whole group to be successful.

Cooperative learning is simply the division of students with varying levels into small groups in order to accomplish shared goals. According to Crandall (1999: 226-227), “cooperative learning is more than just small group activity. In a well-structured cooperative task, there is a genuine information-gap, requiring learners to both listen and

contribute to the development of an oral, written or other product which represents the group's efforts, knowledge and perspectives".

Similarly, Woolfolk (2004: 492) argues that they do not mean the same thing because "group work is simply several students working together, they may or may not be cooperating". Cooperative learning is an arrangement in which students work in mixed ability groups and are rewarded on the basis of the success of the group. In making this distinction between group work and cooperative learning, Woolfolk (2004: 492) claims that group work is the first step to get students to work cooperatively, and she argues that "group work can be useful, but true cooperative learning requires much more than simply putting students in groups".

4. Cooperative Learning versus Collaborative Learning

Some authors use the terms cooperative and collaborative learning interchangeably to mean students working interdependently on a common learning task, however; according to some researchers, there are some differences between the two terms (Bruffee, 1995; Pantiz, 1997; Roschelle & Teasley, 1995 cited in Gillies & Ashman, 2003).

Cooperative learning is a structured approach to learning in groups, while collaborative learning is less structured. That is to say, in cooperative learning, the structure is designed to achieve a specific goal (Pantiz, 1997).

Bruffee (1995 cited in Gillies and Ashman, 2003) proposed that cooperative learning is concerned with children, while collaborative learning is suitable for adults including University students. For him (Bruffee, 1995), cooperative learning is considered to be more appropriate for foundational knowledge, while collaborative learning is seen to be better suitable for non-foundational knowledge.

Ibbora et al. (2009 cited in Luzzatto and Dinarco, 2010) also make a distinction between cooperative and collaborative learning. In cooperative learning underlies a principle of transmitting knowledge working in groups which follow a structured script that a teacher created intentionally. On the other hand, in collaborative learning underlies a principle of transforming all the participants in the learning process. Collaboration then, involves more than occasional cooperative learning activities; it means that students feel connected to their peers and that they experience the classroom as a safe, supportive

community-not a place of isolation and certainly not a place where they must compete against one another (Kohn, 1998 cited in Hoover et al., 2003).

Despite the differences between the two terms, cooperative and collaborative learning have many advantages for learning. Nunan (1992: 13) mentions some of these:

- 1) Learners are an important resource for their own collective learning, and this resource can be assessed through collaboration, cooperation and experiential learning.
- 2) Learning is a social as well as a psychological process.
- 3) Collaborative learning can help learners to use what they already know to go beyond what they currently think.

5. Elements of Cooperative Learning

5.1. Positive interdependence

Is when students reach their learning goals only when other students also reach their goals (Johnson and Johnson, 1987). Richards and Rodgers (2001:196) state that “positive interdependence occurs when group members feel that what helps one member helps all and what hurts one member hurts all”. This means that each group member depends on each other to achieve a common learning goal. It is related with the idea that “we sink or swim together”. In other words, positive interdependence is the perception that you are linked with others in a way that you cannot succeed unless they do; that is, their work benefits you and your work benefits them. It promotes a situation in which students work cooperatively in small groups to maximize the learning of all members of a group, sharing their resources, providing mutual support, and celebrating their joint success (Johnson & Johnson, 1989).

In formal cooperative learning groups, positive interdependence may be structured by asking group members to **(a)** agree on an answer for the group (group product-goal interdependence), **(b)** making sure that each member can explain the groups’ answer (learning goal interdependence), and **(c)** fulfilling the assigned role responsibilities (role interdependence).

Other ways of structuring positive interdependence may include having common rewards such as a shared grade (reward interdependence, or shared resources) (resources

interdependence) (Smith, 1996:73). According to Johnson, Johnson, and Smith (1991: 17), positive interdependence can be structured in a number of ways within a learning group:

-Positive goal interdependence: to ensure that students believe they sink or swim together and are about how much each other learns.

-Positive reward/celebration interdependence: to supplement goal interdependence, the instructor might want to add joint rewards. Sometimes instructors give students a group grade for the group' overall production. Individual grades resulting from tests, and bonus points. Regular celebrations of the group's efforts and successes enhance the quality of cooperation.

-Positive resource interdependence: the instructor highlights cooperation relationships by giving students limited resources or giving each student part of the required resources.

-Positive role interdependence: the teacher creates role interdependence among students by assigning them complementary roles, such as reader, recorder, checker, encourager, or elaborator of knowledge.

5.2. Individual Accountability / Personal Responsibility

The second essential element of cooperative learning is individual accountability (Johnson et al., 1989, 1993 cited in Johnson and Johnson, 1999: 27), which exists when the performance of individual students is assessed, the results (outcomes) are given back to the individual and the group, and the student is held responsible by group mates for contributing his or her fair share to the groups' success. It is important that the group knows who needs more assistance, support, and encouragement in completing the assignment. The purpose of cooperative learning groups is to make each member a stronger individual in his or her own right. Students learn together so that they can subsequently act higher as individuals.

To ensure that each student is individually accountable to do his or her fair share of the group's work, instructors need to assess how much effort each member is contributing to the group's work, provide feedback to groups, and ensure that every member is responsible for the final outcome (Johnson & Johnson, 1999). Common ways of structuring individual accountability include:

1. Keeping the size of the group small.
2. Giving an individual test to each student.
3. Randomly selecting one student's product to represent the entire group.
4. Having students teach what they learned to someone else.
5. Assigning one student in each group the role of checker.

5.3. Face-to-Face Promotive Interaction

Students interact with each other to accomplish the task and promote each other's success. Students are expected to explain orally to each other how to solve problems, discuss together the concepts and strategies being learned, teach the knowledge that they have to classmates, help, encourage, and support each other's efforts to learn (Smith, 1996: 73). In addition, the verbal and non-verbal responses of other group members provide relevant information concerning the student's performance (Johnson & Johnson, 1999: 27). To obtain meaningful face-to-face-interaction, the size of groups should be small (two to four students).

5.4. Social Skills

The fourth essential element of cooperative learning is the appropriate use of interpersonal and small-group skills. Persons must be taught the social skills and be motivated to use them. Such social skills as leadership, decision-making, trust-building, communication, and conflict management skills have to be taught just as purposefully and precisely as academic skills (Johnson & Johnson, 1999: 27). Social skills are important in promoting higher achievement and productivity. That is the more socially skillful participants are, the more social skills are taught and rewarded, and the more individual feedback participants receive on their use of the skills, the higher tends to be the achievement and productivity in cooperative groups (Kath et al., 1994 cited in Gillies et al., 2008: 25).

5.5. Group Processing

The fifth essential component of cooperative learning is group processing. Effective group works is influenced by whether or not reflect on (i.e., process) how well they are functioning.

According to Johnson and Johnson (1999), group processing may be defined as reflecting on a group session to: “(a) describe what member actions were helpful and unhelpful, and (b) make decisions about what actions to continue or change” (cited in Gillies et al., 2008: 25). In other words, they reflect upon their experience as a cooperative group to determine what was positive in their way of handling the task and to modify what was less helpful in their cooperative work.

The major concern of group processing as was identified by Johnson et al. (1994) is that it:

- Permits students to focus on good working relationships.
- Facilitates learning process and the development of social skills.
- Ensures that members receive feedback.
- Provides opportunities for language interaction.

6. Goals of CLL

In second language teaching, the main goal of cooperative language learning is communicative interaction. The interaction among students plays an important role in improving the students' achievement. Students then can learn from each other and contribute to classroom discussions. According to Richards and Rodgers (2001: 193), the most important goals of cooperative language learning are:

- 1) To provide opportunities for naturalistic second language acquisition through the use of interactive pairs and group activities.
- 2) To provide teachers with a methodology to enable them to achieve this goal and one could be implemented in various curriculum settings (e.g., content-based, FL classrooms).
- 3) To focus the attention to specific lexical items, language structures, and communicative functions by using interactive tasks.
- 4) To provide opportunities for learners to develop successful learning and communicative strategies.
- 5) To enhance learners' motivation and reduce learners' stress in order to create a positive classroom atmosphere.

To conclude, these constitute the major goals of cooperative language learning in language teaching. Then, cooperative goals create academic norms between students through which they promote their learning achievement.

7. Redefinition of the Roles

7.1. Teacher's Role

The role of the teacher in CLL differs from the role of the teacher in traditional group work. The teacher has to create highly structured and well-organized environments for classroom instruction. Harel (1992: 169) defines the teacher's role in the classroom as follows:

During this time the teacher interacts, teaches, refocuses, questions, clarifies, supports, expands, celebrates, and empathizes. Depending on what problems evolve, the following supportive behaviors are utilized. Facilitators are giving feedback, redirecting the group with questions, encouraging the group to solve its problems, extending activity, encouraging thinking conflict, observing student and supplying resources.

With CLL, Hyland (1991 cited in Richards and Lockhart, 1996: 102, 103) states that the teacher's role is to:

1. Share the responsibility for managing both interaction and learning.
2. Provide a learning environment so that students can cooperate with each other to obtain learning goals.
3. Coordinate group activities.
4. Provide clarification, feedback, and motivation support.
5. Stimulate interactive language use through group work and collaborative problem solving.

7.2. Learner's Role

CLL "promotes learning through communication in pairs or small groups." (Richards and Rodgers, 2001: 174), and its main concern is to allow students to learn from each other their interaction to the group. In this regard, each individual student will play different roles with regard to his / her personality. As Crandall (1999: 2-3) reports: "for example, in an activity requiring individual roles, an extroverted or more confident student who likes to speak in class may be assigned the role of reporter, while one who prefers to write may be named the recorder".

In CLL, learners are responsible of their own learning. This does not mean that teachers have no role to perform; they evaluate their students by trying to solve their problems, and correct their mistakes. Woolfolk (2004) states that in order to develop cooperation among students, the teacher can assign roles to each member of the group. The following is the possible role that learners can perform (Kagan, 1994 cited in Woolfolk, 2004: 496):

- **Encourager:** encourages students to participate.
- **Praiser:** shows appreciation of other's contribution.
- **Gate Keeper:** equalizes participation and makes sure no one dominates.
- **Coach:** has the role of explaining different concepts.
- **Question Commander:** makes sure all students 'questions are asked and answered.
- **Taskmaster:** keeps the group on task.
- **Recorder:** writes down ideas, decisions, and plans.
- **Reflector:** keeps group aware of progress (or lack of progress).
- **Quiet Captain:** monitors noise level.
- **Materials Monitor:** picks up and return materials.

8. Types of Cooperative Learning

Researchers report that students working in small groups have a better chance to learn more than students who work individually. Students who work in groups appear to be more satisfied with their classes, and group work provides a sense of shared goals that can help students maximize their own learning and motivation (Davis, 2009: 190).

In general, there are three basic types of cooperative learning; cooperative learning groups may be used to teach specific content (formal cooperative learning groups), to ensure active cognitive processing of information during a lecture (informal cooperative learning groups), and to provide a long-term support and assistance for academic progress (cooperative base groups) (Johnson, Johnson, & Holubec, 1992, 1993 cited in Johnson & Johnson, 1999: 29-30).

8.1. Formal Cooperative Learning

Is students working together to achieve common learning goals and complete specific tasks (such as decision making, carry out a project, conduct an experiment, learning vocabulary, or answering questions at the end of the chapter. These tasks may take over

several weeks or the entire term. In this type of cooperative learning, students work together until the task is finished and their project is evaluated or graded. In formal cooperative groups teachers:

1. Specify the objectives for the lesson. In every lesson, there should be an academic objective specifying the concepts and strategies to be learned.
2. Make pre-instructional decisions. A teacher has to decide on the size of groups, the methods used in dividing students into groups, the materials needed to present the lesson, and the way the room will be arranged.
3. Explain the task and the positive interdependence, and the way complete the task successfully. A teacher should define the assignment, teaches the required concepts, specify the positive interdependence and individual accountability, and should give the criteria for success.
4. Assess students' learning and help them process how well groups functioned. This takes place when the teacher decides to end the lesson.
5. Clarify what social skills are to be used. In addition, there should be an extensive emphasis on intergroup cooperation to avoid any kind of competition among group members.

8.2. Informal Cooperative Learning

Informal cooperative learning consists of having students work together to accomplish a shared learning goal. It lasts from a few minutes to one class period (Johnson et al., 1991, 1992). During a lecture, informal cooperative learning can be used to focus student's attention on the material to be learned, provide learning atmosphere, ensure that students cognitively process the material being taught, and provide closure to an instructional session. Informal cooperative learning groups are often organized so that students can engage in three-to-five minutes focused discussions before and after a lecture, and two-to-three minutes turn to your partner negotiating and discussing during a lecture.

8.3. Cooperative Base Groups

Cooperative base groups are long- term groups with stable membership (Johnson et al., 1991, 1992). The main purposes of the base groups are to provide support, help, and

encouragement each member needs to attend class, complete course requirements and assignments, improve attendance, and develop the quality and the quantity of learning. Base groups meet daily in elementary schools and twice in a week in secondary school. They are permanent (lasting from one to several years). They meet to discuss the academic progress of each member of a group, provide help to each other, and verify that each member is completing assignments through the academic program. Base groups also help members catch up when they miss a session.

9. Cooperative Learning Methods

Cooperative learning is not new to teaching. Since 1920, teachers have been used to encourage their students to work cooperatively on occasional group projects and discussions. However, until 1970, some significant research on specific applications of cooperative learning to classroom setting began to take place. As a result, many and different cooperative learning methods are available. Some of these methods which have been extensively researched and widely used are Students Team-Achievement Division (STAD), Jigsaw and Group Investigation (GI).

9.1. Students Team-Achievement Division

The major goal of the team is “to make sure that their teammates have learned the material” (Slavin, 1995: 78). STAD is one of the simplest of all cooperative learning methods, and it is a goal model to begin with for teachers who are new to the cooperative approach. It is a form of cooperative learning that enables students to work and learn together on individual worksheets to prepare for individual quizzes. Students are motivated because they are rewarded. In STAD individual scores are averaged for a team score and teams receive rewards from the teacher. During cooperative learning, students may also participate in group accountability by making a product as a group, such as a presentation or a report (Cohen, 1994).

9.2. Jigsaw

According to the model of Johnson and Johnson of cooperative learning, a jigsaw is a cooperative learning structure in which the material to be learned is divided into separate components. Groups of students are assigned responsibility for each component and learn together how to teach that component. Then, teams with an individual responsible for each component come together to teach each other the entire material. First, students work

together to learn how to best teach the material for which they are responsible. Second students interact in their final teams to teach each other what they have learned. Slavin (1994 cited in Crawford et al., 2005) states that, jigsaw requires students to help each other learn. It can be used when students are reading a text, listening to a presentation, or carrying out a group investigation. The jigsaw method employs both home groups and expert groups. This method involves some previous work from the teacher who must prepare task sheets in advance of the lesson. The jigsaw technique helps all students to learn all of the material, and they “become experts” (cited in Crawford et al., 2005: 56).

9.3. Group Investigation

Group investigation is a form of cooperative learning that requires the students to seek information from different sources inside and outside the classroom. In this method, students are divided into groups of two-to-six members. Slavin (1995: 112) believes that “cooperative interaction and communication among classmates are best achieved within the small group, where exchange among peers and cooperative inquiry can be sustained”.

In group investigation, groups select topics from the units they have studied by the whole class. Each group members plays a role in determining what they want to investigate in order to solve the problem.

In second language acquisition, GI offers many opportunities. That is, this method allows students to develop groups with one to five other people for the purpose of group inquiry. Each student has individual responsibilities and the group work cooperatively to make a report for presentation to all classmates (Slavin, 1995).

10. Benefits of Cooperative Learning

It has been claimed that individuals are more productive when they work in groups than those who do not (Shaw, 1932 cited in Gillies & Ashman, 2003: 2). Studies showed that working in groups could be trained to facilitate academic accomplishments, reduce disruptive behavior, and increase work and study skills. It is also found that cooperative learning is an effective way of increasing student achievement, opportunities for learning can be maximized only if group members are cooperating together on achieving shared goals. In general, there are four main benefits of cooperative learning:

10.1. Learning Strategies

In using cooperative learning, learners practice many strategies. Explaining, negotiating meaning, and using words in actual contexts are important to be used in CL (Hill & Flynn, 2006). Autonomy and responsibility are two metacognitive strategies that are a result of well-planned and organized cooperative group. This means that well structured cooperative groups help each learner to be responsible for his or her Individual learning and the group learning, and for the groups' benefits which make all learners autonomous and responsible.

10.2. Achievement Outcomes

Studies have shown that learners who work cooperatively with each other have gained larger achievement than learners who use traditional learning. In the same vein, Slavin (1980 cited in O'Malley and Chamot, 1990) emphasizes the role of cooperative language learning in fostering academic achievement and positive attitudes towards themselves and their peers.

10.3. Social Outcomes

Cooperative learning has great results on the social relationships. It provides respect and cooperation among students (Hohn, 2005). When learners help each other in groups, they start to make a strong relationship between them and maximize their respect among them. These social effects may go beyond time and place of using cooperative group work.

10.4. Affective Outcomes

According to Brown (2001), the use of cooperative learning helps students feel secure from criticism; and this feeling has a great effect on the usefulness of cooperative learning technique. This security is derived from dividing the embarrassment that the learner would feel when correcting his mistakes among the group work members. Through this way, all learners would become active participants in the learning process.

Johnson and Johnson (2005: 118) note that the feeling of commitment learners have when they are cooperating with each other will reduce their "disruptive behavior". In other words, it is the feeling of participation that students have in doing something meaningful and the feeling of being engaged in the activity.

11. Additional Benefits of Cooperative Learning

Cooperative learning has academic and social benefits for students (Crawford et al., 2005: 48):

1. High order thinking: Students in cooperative learning groups are made to work with ideas and concepts. They are challenged to offer their own interpretations of topics and solve problems.

2. Motivation and morale: Students who work cooperatively are more motivated and they may feel more attached to the class. This may lead to better learning achievement in the classroom.

3. Learning interpersonal skills: Students in cooperative language learning groups work together with each other. Cooperation then, is considered to be as an important life skill, both for productive work on the job, and for participation in a democratic society.

4. Promoting inter-personal and inter-group understanding: Students who work in groups are more likely to learn with people of different sexes and from different social groups. They are also likely to improve stronger self-concepts. Gatfield (1999 cited in Burdett, 2003) cites an empirical study which showed that students who working and learning in groups achieved a higher grade point average than those working individually. Johnson and Johnson (1991) and Baloché (1994 cited in Burdett, 2003: 178) argue that cooperative learning strategies develop greater academic success through social interaction because students are in situations that require them to cooperate and interact with each other to complete common goals.

Although working in groups has its benefits, there are also times when problems arise. Beebe and Masterson (2003) list four disadvantages to working in a group:

1. There may be pressure from the group to conform to the majority opinion. People do not like conflict and try to avoid it all the time, and the individual may agree to a bad solution just to avoid conflict.

2. An individual may dominate the discussion. This leads the members of a group not gaining satisfaction from the group since they feel too alienated in the process of decision making.

3. Some members may rely too much on others to do the work. In other words, some students, mainly the salient ones are lucky to work within a group since they will have a chance to rely on the others to do their work. The solution to this problem is to make each group member aware of the goals and objectives of the group.

4. It takes a long time to work in a group than to work alone. That is to say, it takes longer time to accomplish tasks when working in a group.

12. Strategies for Implementing CLL Classes

Christison (1990) suggests three assumptions of CLL. In the first one, she claimed that cooperative skills must be learned. In the other words, learners are not born with the ability to cooperate with others. They need long-term training before they will be able to cooperate with one another. The second assumption is that the physical and special arrangements of the classroom have a great effect on cooperative work. That is, the groups have to be organized in ways that allow them to interact face-to-face. The third assumption is that peer support and group dynamics are the keys to successful group work.

Crandall (1999: 242) proposes some strategies to carry out a successful cooperative learning. He argues that “if cooperative language learning is to be successful, both teachers and learners need to be adequately prepared and interesting, relevant topics and materials must be available.” He proposes four strategies for the implementation of CLL. First, providing students with cooperative tasks where teachers have to be aware of the teacher-centered classrooms. On the other hand, should be well-trained on different issues such as how to provide feedback. Second, arranging learners to specific tasks, “the quality of the task is central to the success of the cooperative activities” (Crandall, 1999: 243). Indeed, in order to get learners involved in the tasks and show their interest in them, they have to be motivated. Third, reflecting on what was learned whether social, cognitive or linguistic is considered to be an essential step in learning. In addition, some problems are likely to arise because learners used to work individually through competing each other, so, they need some time to cope with new method. Fourth, involving learners in evaluating individual and group contributions. In this vein, Crandall (1999: 243) points out that “involving learners in assessment and evaluation can lead to a sense of shared responsibility for the learning in the classroom, but it is a new experience for many students and may not be fully appreciated at first”.

Christison (1990) states that before students start their activities, they should be taught some cooperative skills. Johnson and Johnson (1975 cited in Christison, 1990) proposes four steps to teach these skills. First, learners should see the value of cooperative work. They claim that teachers contribute to do that through: a) Explaining the value of CLL and b) Placing posters to remind students of the advantages of CLL.

The second step is that learners should be aware of the skills that cooperative learning involves. The third step is that learners should practice the skills which they acquire. The last step is processing the skills; which means “students need to become aware of what exactly they have practiced and to evaluate how successful they have been in the practice of the skills” (Christison, 1990: 145).

13. Cooperative Learning as a Motivational Factor

Trying to motivate learners to learn a foreign language is a big challenge for teachers. Deitte and Howe (2003: 280) state that “students’ motivation is an essential component of successful student learning, but it is also one of the most challenging areas for teachers.”

Lampert (2001: 1) directs attention to the fact that:

Learning together to reach a common learning goal is regarded to be a crucial factor in enhancing students’ motivation to learn. For Hackman (1983: 72), groups are regarded as major sources of motivation. That is cooperative learning groups are high-motivated when working cooperatively.

Bellanca and forgarty (1991: 242) report that all students of all ability levels in cooperative learning groups enhance their short and long-term memory as well as their critical thinking skills and that because cooperative learning leads to positive interaction among students, intrinsic learning motivation and emotional involvement in learning are developed to a higher degree. This implies that students with different levels in cooperative groups help them to interact with each other, discuss, and negotiate, and this may enhance their critical thinking as well as their understanding of the material they have learned and help them develop their intrinsic motivation.

Conclusion

Cooperative learning is a group based learning method, in which students learn jointly for the purpose of achieving common learning goals. It tends to promote productivity and achievement and more opportunities for classroom communication.

The implementation of cooperative language learning technique in the classroom allows students how to interact with each other, learn from their groups as well as evaluate themselves by other students. Furthermore, CL can enhance their motivation, reduce anxiety, and create a learning atmosphere. All these elements motivate students to maximize their own learning. The next chapter will be devoted to the speaking skill; the focus will be on its basic elements, characteristics and its functions, and finally we will talk about speaking difficulties that EFL students may face in speaking the language.

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Chapter Two

The Speaking Skill

Introduction

Making learners able to communicate effectively through language is the responsibility of any teacher working with English Language Learners (ELLs). Therefore, teaching English as a foreign language requires a good mastery in both the productive and the receptive skills; reading, speaking, writing, and listening. The first and the last aim of acquiring such language skills is to achieve a high development of abilities of receiving and producing the second language either in spoken or written form. As far as speaking is concerned, it is regarded as the major skill to be developed because it is necessary for human communication. Learners are going to be put in a situation where communication in English is needed, that is why the focus is mainly on speaking.

In this chapter, light will be shed on the speaking skill with more details; we will deal with general issues about speaking; the nature of speaking, its definitions, including the main elements and some of the characteristics of speaking. Then, the emphasis will be on the oral speaking strategies and activities, with some focus on speaking functions and difficulties. Also, the teacher's role is concerned.

1. Definition of Speaking

The speaking skill as commonly agreed on, represents the act of speech that involves the selection of interpreted patterns of element of the code or language for the expression of an intention and the assembling of the necessary features. Through this act, we can express our feeling and thoughts, communicate our intentions, react and interact with other people, and influence other peoples. In other words, speaking is a process of sending and receiving messages through communicating with others to convey meanings. According to Hedge (2000: 261), the term speaking is defined as “a skill by which people are judged while first impressions are being formed.” That is to say, speaking is a basic skill by which people communicate to complete different oral situations. Carter defined speaking as “one of the type of composing the language, the type that is swift, complicated, frequent and primary, because the language itself is symbolic used by communicators to construct and convey information” (1997: 4).

Channey (1998:13) states that “speaking is the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols in various contexts”. For Widdowson (1994), speaking is the active production skill and the use of oral production. It is the capability of someone to communicate orally with others.

According to Kayi (2006), speaking means the gap between the linguistic expertise and teaching methodology. This means, the linguistic expertise is concerned with the language structure and content. Harmer (1991) states that speaking is a form of communication which important what you say is conveyed in the particular way, how you say something it can be important as what you say in getting meaning.

Based on the previous definitions, many researchers agreed on the fact that speaking is the process of sharing with others, one’s knowledge, interests, attitudes, opinions or ideas. These are the most important aspects of speaking skill. In general, speaking is the ability to say, address, and to use the language in the real life communications.

2. The Nature of Speaking

Speaking is one of the main aspects of communication which involves a communicative ability of producing and receiving information. Byrne (1986: 8) states that: “oral communication is two-way process between speaker and listener (or listeners) and involves the productive skill of speaking and the receptive skill of understanding (or listening with understanding)”.

That is, oral communication involves the verbal exchange between the speaker and the listener, and is always concerned with the context in which it occurs. Both speaker and listener play a role in communication; while the speaker has to encode the message he wishes to convey, the listener has to interpret that message because speaking is an interactive process of meaning that involves producing, receiving, and processing information.

Luoma (2004:1) argues that “speaking in a foreign language is very difficult and competence in speaking takes a long time to develop.” That is, the speaking skill requires from the learner a lot of practice and for a long time in order to be competent in the foreign language.

As much as speaking is concerned, writing on the other hand, is a process through which learners can express their ideas and thoughts, and their opinions and views by using

different utterances and sentences. Moreover, the history of language teaching emphasized sentences and well-structured paragraphs.

3. The Speaking Sub-Skills

Speaking has its own sub-skills that are different from the other skills. A good speaker has to acquire these sub-skills in order to succeed in communication. Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983: 140) state that learners have to:

1. Think of ideas they want to express, either initiating a conversation, or responding to a previous speaker.
2. Change the tongue, lips and position to articulate the appropriate sounds.
3. Be aware of the different functional expressions, as well as grammatical, lexical, and cultural features.
4. Be sensitive to any change in the “register” or style necessitated by the person (s) to whom they are speaking and the situation in which the conversation occurs.
5. Change the direction of their thoughts on the basis of the other person’s responses.

To sum, in speaking, the learner has to master these sub-skills of knowing what, how, why, to whom and when to say something. The teacher’s role then, is to evaluate students’ speech production to determine what skills and knowledge students already have and what areas need to be developed. Hence, the responsibility of the teacher is to vary activities related to different skills through providing a lot of practice that prepares students for real communication.

4. The Relationship between Listening and Speaking

Many studies have shown that the receptive skills (listening and reading) are related to the productive ones (speaking and writing), and that the two interact and complete each other in different ways. On this light, Jones (1996: 12) comments, “in speaking and listening we tend to be getting something done, exploring ideas, working out some aspect of the world, or simply being together. In writing we may be creating a record, committing events or moments to paper”.

Harmer (2001) and Byrne (1991) emphasized the interdependence of oral skills in communication. Speaking and listening then are two basic skills and are essential in acquiring the communicative competence. Therefore, listening will not occur unless there

must be a speech to listen to. So, to build a successful communication both the speaker and the listener must play a role in it by interacting and negotiating with others. The role of the speaker, then, is to produce comprehensible output, whereas the listener's role is to pay attention and then process this output effectively. Thus, speaking is an important part of listening and reception is also an essential part of production.

5. Elements of Speaking

The speaking skill is considered as the core of any language teaching and learning since this skill involves linguistic forms of language and knowledge of when, how and to whom it is appropriate to use these forms. Also, individuals when learning a language usually try to speak it. This enables us to understand that the speaking skill relies not only on the correct use of grammatical structures, but also on many other forms like connected speech, expressive devices, and fluency. So, to speak the language fluently, second or foreign language learners should master the linguistic elements of the language in order to express their ideas, thoughts, and views. Harmer (2001: 269) mentions these elements which refer to both the language features and the mental processing.

5.1. Language Features

Language features consists of the following elements:

5.1.1. Connected speech: learners need to be able to produce more connected sounds not only separated phonemes. These sounds may be modified (assimilation), omitted (elision), added (linking) or weakened. Harmer (2001: 269) complains that “in connected speech sounds are modified”.

5.1.2. Expressive devices: English native speakers use the phonological rules such as: the pitch, stress, volume, speed. These devices help them to convey the intended meaning and express what they want to say. Students, then, should have this ability of employing certain devices if they want to be good communicators.

5.1.3. Lexis and grammar: learners produce a number of common lexical phrases, especially in the performance of certain language functions. Therefore, the teacher's role is to provide them with different phrases which carry distinctive functions such, agreeing or disagreeing, expressing surprise, shock or approval.

5.1.4. Negotiation language: it is a way of getting students practice the language by giving pairs of students different cards, which each has one of these phrases written on them. Students then have to use the language forms written on their cards to interrupt and

ask some questions. They use negotiation language to show the structure of their thoughts, or reformulate what they want to say in a clearer manner.

5.2. Mental / Social Processing

The necessary processing skills of speaking are the following:

5.2.1. Language processing: it refers to the ability of the learners or speakers to process the language in their minds through putting it into coherent order so that the interlocutors can understand and get the intended meaning. Speakers then should retrieve words and phrases from their memories to use them when they are communicating with others.

5.2.2. Interacting with others: speaking requires interaction with one or more participants; this means that effective oral communication requires a good deal of listening, and understanding of how the other participants are feeling and the knowledge of how they take turns in communication.

5.2.3. Information processing: it refers to the ability of processing the information in the mind. That is, the time speakers get information, they should be aware to respond to the others' talk.

Therefore, the English teacher should consider these elements of speaking in teaching speaking to their students so that they will have a good ability in it. Moreover, as explained by Hughes (2003: 130) that for assessing spoken English production, teachers have to assess students' pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and fluency. Although his theory does not mention explicitly about the element of speaking, however the implementation to assess the spoken English production is dealing with the elements of speaking itself.

6. Types of Classroom Speaking Performance

Brown (2001: 271-272) mentions six types of classroom speaking performance that the learners are supposed to achieve in the class.

6.1. Imitative

Students may be put in situations in which they are exposed to use authentic listening materials; they tend to imitate native speakers, and pronounce the words the same way that they heard them. This exactly helps a lot in the process of language learning. "Drilling" then is also very important in the learning process; it gives the students a chance to listen and to repeat orally certain language forms (phonological, grammatical).

6.2. Intensive

The students are exposed to the intensive practice of the language focusing on the words' or sentences' stress and rhythm; it can be self-initiated or as it can be practiced in pairs.

6.3. Responsive

Students in a language class are responsive; they give the teacher short answers when they are asked. They also may comment or ask a question about a given situation. But in fact, their speech may be “meaningful and authentic”.

6.4. Transactional (dialogue)

Transaction is “an extended form of responsive language”. That is, students have the opportunity to discuss and negotiate what they say. It could be part of pair work as well as it can be part of group work.

6.5. Interpersonal (dialogue)

Interpersonal dialogues are performed for the sake of maintaining social relationships. Such interpersonal dialogues may be complicated for students because they may include colloquial language, slang, or ellipses.

6.6. Extensive (monologue)

Students are asked to give extended monologues in the form of oral reports, summaries, or short speeches in which their performance will be individual. These called monologues. The language style that is used in this type of speaking is more deliberative and formal for extensive tasks.

These types of speaking performance need creative teachers who will always measure speaking ability of his or her students through various techniques that suit their level, whether beginner, intermediate or advanced students. Beside those kinds of speaking activities in the classroom, we have to consider whether the activity is given to improve students' accuracy, or to improve students' fluency.

In accuracy activity, teachers want to make sure that their students get enough practice in a particular point of grammar, vocabulary, or pronunciation.

In fluency activity, teachers want to give students opportunities to use the language freely, even if they make mistakes. In this type of activity, teachers make their students work in groups or in pairs, such as “group discussion, or role play”.

7. Characteristics of Speaking Performance

In recent teaching context, the attention was given to design activities which focus more on tasks that make a balance between the need to achieve both fluency and accuracy. These criteria are based upon on the assessment of oral skills. In communicative approach, fluency and accuracy are considered to be the major characteristics of that approach. Richards and Rodgers (2001: 157) state that “fluency and acceptable language is the primary goal: Accuracy is judged not in the abstract but in context”.

Hedge (2000:61) makes a significant point that “the communicative approach somehow excuses teachers and learners from a consideration of how to develop high levels of accuracy in the use of grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary.”Learners then should know how the language system works in a correct and appropriate way. The following are some characteristics of oral performance that learners have to take into account.

7.1. Fluency

The main aim that teachers wish to achieve in teaching the productive skill of speaking is oral fluency; which is considered as the main feature of the speaker production. Hughes (2002) defines fluency as the ability to express oneself in an intelligible, reasonable and accurate way without too much hesitation. Hedge (2000: 54) adds also that: “the term fluency relates to the production and it is normally reserved for speech. It is the ability to link units of speech together with facility and without strain or inappropriate showiness, or undue hesitation”.

Many of second language speakers think of fluency as the ability to speak fast, without pauses. Thornbury (2005) argues that speed is an important element in fluency and pausing too, because speakers need to take breath. In such cases Thornbury suggests what is called “tricks” or production strategies, i.e. the ability to fill the pauses. The most common pause fillers are “uh” and “um”, vagueness expressions such as “short of” and “I mean”. Another device for filling the pauses is the repetition of one word when there is a pause.

7.2. Accuracy

Most second language teachers included the term accuracy in their teaching because learners are interested to be more fluent and they forget about being accurate. Without structuring accurate speech, interlocutors cannot understand the speaker and they will lose interest if they perform incorrect utterances. Skehan (1996: 23 cited in Ellis and Barkhuizen 2005: 139) define accuracy as referring “to how well the target language is

produced in relation to the rule system of the target language.” Therefore, learners should focus on number of points in their production of the spoken language mainly the grammatical structure, vocabulary, and pronunciation.

7.2.1. Grammar

According to (IELTS, 2001: 15 cited in Hughes 2002) the grammatical accuracy refers to the range and the appropriate use of the learners’ grammatical structure which involves the length and the complexity of the utterances in addition to the ability to use the subordinating clauses.

Thornbury (2005) lists the following features of spoken grammar:

- Clause is the basic unit of construction.
- Clauses are always added (co-ordinate).
- Direct speech favored.
- A lot of ellipsis.
- Many tag questions.
- Performance effects (hesitation, repetition, false starts, incompleteness).

7.2.2. Vocabulary

Achieving accuracy in terms of vocabulary refers to the appropriate selection of words during speaking. Students often face difficulties when they try to express what they want to say, they lack the appropriate vocabulary, and they sometimes use incorrect synonyms which do not carry the same meaning in all contexts. According to Harmer (2001) the knowledge of the word classes also allows speakers to perform well-formed utterances. Students then should be able to use different words and expressions accurately.

7.2.3. Pronunciation

English language has been considered either by native speakers or non native speakers as a difficult language because of its pronunciation. Learners, then who want to improve their speaking ability in English should practice pronunciation. They should also be aware of the different sounds and their features; and also be aware of where the words should be stressed, when to use raising intonation and when to use a falling one. All these will give them information about how to speak English effectively and help them to achieve a better understanding of spoken English. Redmond and Vrchota (2007: 104) claim that, “it is imperative that you use the correct word in the correct instance and with the correct pronunciation. Pronunciation means to say words in ways that are generally accepted or understood”.

8. Oral Communicative Strategies

The aim of learning a second language in the classroom is to be able to communicate in that language effectively, i.e. the ability to speak the language fluently. However, learners may face problems while cooperating and interacting with others. Communicative strategies then are the best way to overcome these problems of communication. Ellis and Barkhuizen (2005: 170-171) define communicative strategies as “speakers-oriented; that is they are used by learners to compensate for lack of second language knowledge or their inability to access the second language knowledge they have”. According to Hughes (2002), this term refers to the ability to manipulate a conversation.

Bygate (1987) classifies communication strategies into two categories. The first category is called achievement strategies that include: guessing strategies, paraphrase strategies and cooperative strategies. The second category is reduction strategies which include avoidance strategies.

8.1. Achievement Strategies

Achievement strategies consist of the following sub-strategies:

8.1.1. Guessing strategies

It is a strategy in which the speaker uses a word from his mother tongue and pronounces it as it belongs to the target language like a freshmen who speaks English and uses the word “manoeuvre” as it is an English word. The speaker might also use a word from his mother tongue without changing it hoping that the interlocutors can understand it.

8.1.2. Paraphrase strategies

It is a strategy in which the speaker uses a synonym or an alternative to the word or the expression that he needs in the target language. The speaker may also explain a word by using certain phrases or expressions to convey his message.

8.1.3. Cooperative strategies

It is a strategy that is used when the speaker gets help from the other interlocutors. The speaker may ask for the word through using it in the mother tongue and the interlocutors help him to find the meaning of that word in the target language, or through indicating the object that he means.

8.2. Reduction Strategies

Learners decrease their communicative objectives through avoiding the topic or abandoning a specific message. Reduction strategies include avoidance strategies:

8.2.1. Avoidance strategies

The learners use such strategies to avoid different types of trouble that they have. They avoid some specific sound sequence, for example;” th” in English. Others wish to avoid the conditional in English and so forth. In using these particular strategies; students may avoid some difficulties in expressing their views and opinions because of the lack of vocabulary, so they avoid some of the content of the message and look for something else to talk about or they keep silent.

9. Speaking Difficulties in Foreign Language Learning

Practicing the speaking skill of the foreign language is not knowing about this language. Echevarria et al. (2008) support that the difference between the knowledge of how things must be done and the ability to do these things is crucial in the learning process. Learners often face some difficulties while practicing the speaking skill even if they know about the system of foreign language. Parrot (1993) confirms that teachers must perform different tasks and activities that aim at providing learners with the confidence and the required skills to take the advantages of the classroom opportunities in order to speak English effectively. According to Ur (2000) these are the major problems in getting students to speak the foreign language in the classroom.

9.1. Inhibition

This problem occurs when learners try to participate in the classroom but many factors stop them to do so. Littlewood (1999: 93) argues that “it is too easy for a foreign language classroom to create inhibition and anxiety.” Such factors refer to the feeling of shyness and fear of making mistakes. Students are afraid of making mistakes mainly if they will speak to critical audience. Ur (2000: 111) states that:

Learners are often inhibited about trying to say things in a foreign language in the classroom. Worried about making mistakes, fearful of criticism or losing face, or imply shy of the attention that their speech attracts.

This idea is also supported by Bowman et al. (1989) who argue that in teaching speaking you are asking your students to talk in front of the whole class, and this makes many of them feel stress during speaking activities. Stress and anxiety then are two factors that can stop students to speak in front of their classmates.

9.2. Nothing to Say

Most of the second language learners use common expressions when they are imposed to participate in a given topic. Such expressions as “I have nothing to talk about”, “I do not know”, “no comment” or they keep silent. These expressions are due to the lack of motivation, interest, and vocabulary or the unfamiliarity with the topic they should discuss or talk about. Rivers (1968: 192) says that

The teacher may have chosen a topic which is uncongenial to him (the learner) or about which he knows very little, and as a result he has nothing to express whether in the native language or the foreign language.

Moreover, the poor practice of the second language can contribute to create this problem. Baker and Westrup (2003) support that many students find it difficult to answer when teachers ask them to say anything in the target language. The learners may not know to use some vocabulary or they are not sure of the grammatical correctness. Also, they could not carry out the discussion on topics that are not interesting for them.

9.3. Low Uneven Participation

It refers to the amount of each student’s time of talking. Rivers (1968) claims that certain personality factors may affect participation in a FL. There are some students who tend to be dominant and take almost the whole students’ talk time. However, others prefer to speak only if they ensure that what they will say is correct, and some others keep silent, show no interest during the course. Harmer (2001) suggests streaming weak participators in letting them work together. In such cases they will not hide behind the strong participators, and the teacher here can achieve a high level of participation. Another factor which can create a problem of participation is the classroom arrangement that may not be helpful for students to perform different speaking activities. Bowman et al. (1989: 40) argue that “traditional classroom seating arrangements often work against you in your interactive teaching”. Low participation also is due to the ignorance of teacher’s motivation; if the teacher does not motivate and encourage his learners, even the talkative ones also will not be interested. So, increasing students’ motivation is one of the teacher’s responsibilities.

9.4. Deficient Vocabulary

It is simply defined as the learners’ poor package vocabulary items of the target language. Deficient vocabulary is a serious problem that learners face in any conversation, because they are not able to express their opinions, therefore, students prefer to keep silent and avoid intervening in the conversation. Consequently, this problem will impede the

learners to develop their communicative skills. The teacher then must be aware of this problem and try to find solutions to overcome this deficiency. For example, he may ask his students to memorize few words in English every day, or he may teach vocabulary through providing different pictures on the board.

9.5. Mother Tongue Use

As a consequent of the environment, SL learners tend to use their mother tongues outside and even inside the classroom because they feel comfortable and less exposed to the target language. According to Baker and Westrup (2003: 12) “barriers to learning can occur if students knowingly or unknowingly transfer the cultural rules from their mother tongue to a foreign language.” Then, lack of vocabulary of the target language leads learners to bring some words from their mother language. Therefore; the learners will not be able to use the foreign language correctly if they keep on being influenced by the use of their mother tongue. Thus, teachers should give strict instructions to the students not to use their native language inside the classroom, and try to learn the most used vocabulary of the target language that help them to interact and speak freely.

9.6. Poor Listening Practice

Since speaking is an interaction between two or more people, listening comprehension plays a fundamental role in it. That is the student may have acquired a skill in expressing himself in the foreign language, but he has little practice in understanding the oral language when the spoken language is at a normal speed of delivery in a conversation. The student therefore does not understand the required elements in the message to be able to make further contribution to the discussion. Students need more practice in listening to the target language which will help them to develop their oral performance.

10. Features of a Successful Speaking

Finding a way to overcome the students’ problems in developing their oral skills has become many teachers’ concern. The following is a model of teaching that can be used to improve the students’ oral production and create a successful speaking activity as defined by Ur (1996: 120):

- Learner talks a lot: as much as possible, the speaking activity in the classroom is dominated by learners.
- Participation is even: all learners get a chance to speak.

- Motivation is high: learners become eager to speak because they are interested in the topic and they have something new to say about it.
- Language is of an acceptable level: learners express themselves in utterances that are relevant.

So, in order to create a successful speaking activity and help students improve their speaking skill, the teacher should try to:

- Be creative in teaching the students.
- Give students simple language to use.
- Encourage them to use English appropriately.
- Create an English environment in their classroom.
- Keep reminding his students to speak English.

11. Classroom Speaking Activities

To make students communicate and to become aware of their language use can only be achieved by input from the teacher. Teachers need to create situations where students get the chance to speak and communicate with each other. Speaking activities in the classroom then, are an important part of teaching English since they help students to develop their language skills and fluency when talking. Ur (1996: 120-121) argues that the speaking skill is the most important skill because most of foreign language learners are interested in becoming actual speakers of a language. Therefore, effective teachers should use different activities that motivate students to perform better in the language classroom. Such activities as communication games, information-gap activities, discussion, problem-solving activity, and acting from a script activity are considered to be the major ones.

11.1. Communication Games

Teachers design such games to encourage and involve the students in a verbal interaction. In other words, this kind of games is designed for the sake of provoking communication between the students so that one student has to talk to other student in order to solve a puzzle (game). The teacher here can bring these activities from radio and TV games in the classroom. For Bygate (1987) such activities include first, “Describe and Draw” in which one student is asked to describe a picture and the other student should draw it. Second, “Describe and Arrange”; one student describes a structure that is made of some objects and the other student is asked to organize it and put things in the right order

without seeing the original picture. Third, “Find the Difference”; two students have two similar pictures but with some differences, they must extract these differences through describing their pictures without seeing each others’ pictures. O’Malley and Pierce (1996) call these activities “information gap-activities” which refers to a situation where one student is provided with information that is kept from a partner.

11.2. Information-Gap Activities

Information-gap activities are interactive activities where two different information that have to be in common to gain the entire information. This activity involves the students’ ability to fill gaps when there is a missing of information. Gower and Walters (1995: 211) defined information gap-activity as “a situation where information is known by only one or some of those who are present. Students use the language they have at their command to bridge the information gap by asking questions, and giving information”. According to Brown (2001: 185), information-gap activities include a variety of techniques in which the aim is to convey or to request information. The two main features of information-gap techniques are (1) their primary attention to information and not to language forms and (2) the necessity of communicative interaction in order to reach the objective. The information that learners must seek could be organized from the simple to the complex. The teacher uses this kind of activity aiming at sharing information between students during an oral classroom course.

11.3. Discussion

Discussion is one of the most important activities in the process of language learning. According to Harmer (2001: 128), “---discussion whether spontaneous or planned, has the great advantage of provoking fluent language use”. However, Thornbury (2005) says that many teachers agree that the best discussions are those that arise spontaneously either because the learner reports something personal or because the topic of the course book arises discussion.

Lindsay and Knight (2006) point out that in such activity, students are supposed to give their views or receive others’ opinions, they can speak without being told what they have to say or not by the instructor, they should be only informed what to talk about. Littlewood (1981: 47) states that “discussion provides learners with opportunities to express their own personality and experience through the foreign language”. This means that “discussion” is

considered as a real language experience through which students use their abilities to express themselves. However, in some cases the students cannot give and express their opinions mainly if they cannot think of anything to say or they are not confident about what to talk about, and this is one of the reasons that discussions fail. Many students feel extremely exposed to classroom in discussion (Barnes & Todd, 1977: 81). Teachers then have to keep in mind that topics for discussion are not selected at random. So, to get a successful discussion, the teacher should respect the following:

- Provide the students with different sources of input (both topical information and language forms), newspapers, video-recording, or text so that they can have something to say.
- Offer choices relevance to professional / educational level of the students to feel comfortable with the topic chosen from several choices.
- Set a goal or outcome of discussion as group product.
- Use small groups instead of large groups or whole class discussion as, large groups can make participation difficult.
- Give feedback on grammar or pronunciation problems.
- Allow students to participate in their own way. Do not expect all of them to contribute to the discussion, some students may feel uncomfortable to talk about certain topics.

11.4. Problem-Solving Activities

Problem-solving activities are communicative fluency activities. Learners have to solve the problems and find the best solutions to those problems then discuss them with all the class. Barker and Gaut (2002: 160) define problem-solving as follows:

A problem-solving group is a group of people who work together to solve a problem by collecting information about the problem, reviewing that information, and making a decision based on their findings.

That is, in problem-solving activity, students are involved in classroom activities to work together in order to solve problems of different kinds. Klippel (1983: 102) states that the problem tasks are scaled from imaginary to realistic ones. He discusses fourteen problem-solving activities, but just two will be discussed. One of the activities is organized in groups; and the other one is organized either in groups or in the whole class, but both of them are for intermediate and advanced learners.

11.4.1. Rescue

This activity takes from 10 to 20 minutes. It consists of three steps. In the first step, the teacher tries to explain the situation that needs to be solved like “The earth is doomed. All life is going to perish in two days due to radiation. A spaceship from another solar system lands and offers to rescue twelve people, who could start a new world on an empty planet very much like earth. Imagine you are the selection committee and you have to decide who may be rescued. Think of list of criteria which you may use in your decision.” (Klippel, 1983: 104). In the second step, each group discusses the problem and tries to put the list. For the last step, each group presents its list in front of the whole class, and then discusses it.

11.4.2. Something for Everybody

Something for everybody is done from 10 to 20 minutes also. It consists of two steps. In the first step, students form groups, and the teacher gives the situation that will be discussed. For example, “imagine that you, that is all of you together, have 20 left over from a bargain sale you organized. You should now think of what you could do with the money so that everyone in the class is satisfied. First write down all the ideas you have without talking about them or commenting on them, then rank them. When you have found one suggestion you all agree with, present it to the class” (Klippel, 1983: 110). In the second step, each group presents its suggestion. The class then tries to agree on just one element, and then gives arguments and reasons.

11.5. Acting from a Script

Students are asked to act out scenes either from their writings or from a play or their course book. Students are supposed to act out these scenes in front of the classroom.

Harmer (2001: 271) states certain directions in order to get effective results:

- 1) Do not choose the shyest students to be the first who act in the front of the classroom.
- 2) Try to create a supportive atmosphere in the classroom.
- 3) Give students time of preparation before they start to perform the dialogue.
- 4) Draw attention to appropriate stress, intonation, and speed.
- 5) Ensure that acting out is both a learning and language producing activity by practice the above features before the final performance.

12. Functions of Speaking

Numerous attempts have been made to classify the functions of speaking in human interaction. Brown and Yule (1983 cited in Richards, 2008: 21) made a distinction between the interactional functions of speaking, in which it serves to establish and maintain social relations, and the transactional functions, which focus on the exchange of information. Richards (2008: 21) claims that there are three main functions of speaking mentioned as follows:

12.1. Talk as Interaction

Talk as interaction refers to what we mean by “conversation” and describes interaction that serves a primarily social function. When people meet, they exchange greetings, engage in small talk, and recount recent experience. It focuses on the speakers and their social needs rather than on the message itself. Such exchanges may be either casual or more formal depending on the different circumstances. The main features of talk as interaction can be summarized as follows:

- Has a primarily social function.
- Reflects role relationships.
- Reflects speaker’s identity.
- May be formal or casual.
- Uses conversational conventions.
- Reflects degrees of politeness.
- Uses conversational register.
- Is jointly constructed.

12.2. Talk as Transaction

Talk as transaction refers to situations where the focus is on what is said or done. The central focus of this type of talk is on making the message clear and accurate rather than on the participants and how they interact socially with others. In such transactions,

...talk is associated with other activities. For example, students may be engaged in hands-on activities (e.g., in a science lesson) to explore concepts associated with floating and sinking. In this type of spoken language students and teachers usually focus on meaning or on talking their way to understanding (Jones, 1996: 14).

Burns (1998 cited in Richards, 2008: 26) distinguishes between two different types of talk as transaction. The first type involves situations where the focus is on giving and receiving information and where the speakers (participants) focus on what is said or achieved. Accuracy is not important as long as information is successfully communicated. The second type is transactions that emphasize on obtaining goods, such as checking into a hotel or ordering food.

The main features of talk as transactions are:

- It has a primarily information focus.
- It focuses on the message and not the participants.
- Communication strategies are used.
- There may be negotiation and digression.
- Linguistic accuracy is not always important.

12.3. Talk as Performance

It refers to public talk that transmits information before audience, such as classroom presentations, public announcements, and speeches. Talk as performance tends to be in the form of monologue rather than dialogue where the focus is on the written language than conversational language. Similarly, it is often evaluated according to its effectiveness or impact on the listener, something that is unlikely to happen with talk as interaction or transaction.

Examples of talk as performance are:

- Giving a class report about a school trip.
- Conducting a class debate.
- Giving a speech of welcome.
- Giving a lecture.
- Making a sales presentation.

The main features of talk as performance are:

- The focus is on both message and audience.
- Importance of both form and accuracy.
- The main focus is on written language.

- The emphasis is on monologue rather than dialogue.
- Predictable organization and sequencing.

13. Reasons for Teaching Speaking

Harmer (2007: 123) stated that there are three main reasons for getting students to speak in the classroom:

1. Speaking activities provide rehearsal opportunities changes to practice real life speaking in the safety of classroom.
2. Speaking tasks in which students try to use any or all of language they know to provide feedback for both teachers and students. Everyone can see how well they are doing, how successful they are, and what language problems they are experiencing.
3. In speaking, students have opportunities to activate the different elements of language they have stored in their brains, the more automatic their use of these elements become. As a result, students gradually become autonomous language users. This means that they will be able to use words and phrases.

14. The Roles of the Teacher

In any type of classroom procedure, teachers need to play a number of different roles during the classroom speaking activities. The primary role of the teacher, then, is to provide a learning environment for successful learning. However, Harmer (2001: 275-276) suggests three roles of the teacher in which he is trying to get students speak fluently.

1. Prompter: students sometimes get lost; they cannot think of what to say next, or in some other ways loose the fluency the teacher expects of them. The teacher in this role should be very careful; he can leave them to struggle out of such situations on their own. However, the teacher may help the students by offering discrete suggestions. This will stop the sense of frustration that some students might feel when they come to a “dead end” of language or ideas.

2. Participant: any teacher in the classroom has a chance to participate in discussions. Through this way, the teacher can prompt covertly, introduce extra information to carry out the activity, ensure student engagement, and maintain a creative atmosphere. However, in

such situations the teacher should be very careful of participating too much, thus, dominating the speaking and drawing all the attention.

3. Feedback Provider: when students are in the middle of speaking tasks, over-correction may inhibit them and take the communicativeness out of the activity. On the other hand, positively and encouragingly correction may get students out of difficult misunderstanding and hesitations. Therefore, the teacher should be very careful about when and how to give feedback in the speaking activity since everything depends upon teacher tact and the appropriateness of the feedback provided.

Conclusion

Speaking is considered as one of the most important language skills that helps to evaluate learners' oral proficiency in the target language. It should be one of the basic curriculum designs of second or foreign language teaching in addition to other language skills. It requires from teachers to provide learners with effective oral practice through adopting different techniques and procedures to develop students' oral production. Also, it requires from the learner to make active use of language that is accurate and correct in both grammar and pronunciation. Thus, fluency and accuracy are two main aspects of language that need to be developed in the language classroom. Teaching speaking then is very important in the field of teaching foreign languages because speaking plays a significant role in providing students with more opportunities to communicate in the foreign or second language.

**CHAPTER THREE: FIELD WORK: ANALYSIS AND
INTERPRETATION OF TEACHERS' AND STUDENTS'
QUESTIONNAIRE**

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Chapter Three: Field Work

Analysis and Interpretation of Teachers' and Students' Questionnaire

Introduction

The present research is about eliciting teachers' and students' opinion about the effect of using cooperative language learning technique on developing the speaking skill. Their views and opinions are very important and crucial to test the stated hypothesis, and the most appropriate tool to investigate that is through addressing a questionnaire to both learners and teachers.

The students' questionnaire aims at finding out whether the learners give importance to the use of cooperative learning in the classroom in developing their speaking skill through cooperating with each other.

The teachers' questionnaire is intended to investigate the teachers' views about supporting cooperative learning as a pedagogical strategy to improve the learners' oral performance.

This chapter, then clarifies the research design in terms of the sample, description of the questionnaires, and the analysis of both students' and teachers' questionnaire. Moreover, it also contains the discussion of the results.

1. Analysis and Interpretation of the Students' Questionnaire

1.1. The Sample

The fifty (50) students who responded to the questionnaire were chosen among the total number of the second year LMD students' population (449) at the University of Mohamed Kheider, Biskra. It is a whole group selected randomly because they are more motivated and interested in learning the foreign language, and their experience in EFL learning at University gives them an opportunity to express their views confidently.

1.2. Description of the Questionnaire

This questionnaire consists of sixteen (16) questions which are organized in a logical order. They are grouped into three sections:

Section One: aims to gather information about the students' background information. It consists of five questions concerning the students' gender, age, English choice, level, and attitudes towards English.

Section Two: is concerned with the students' attitude towards the speaking skill. It consists of five closed ended questions and one open ended question.

Section Three: is about knowing the students' attitude towards cooperative language learning. This section contains four closed ended questions and one open ended question.

1.3. Analysis of the Results

Students' Questionnaire

Section One: Background Information

Q1: Gender

a-Male

b-Female

Option	Number	Percentage
a	11	22
b	39	78
Total	50	100

Table 1: Students' gender

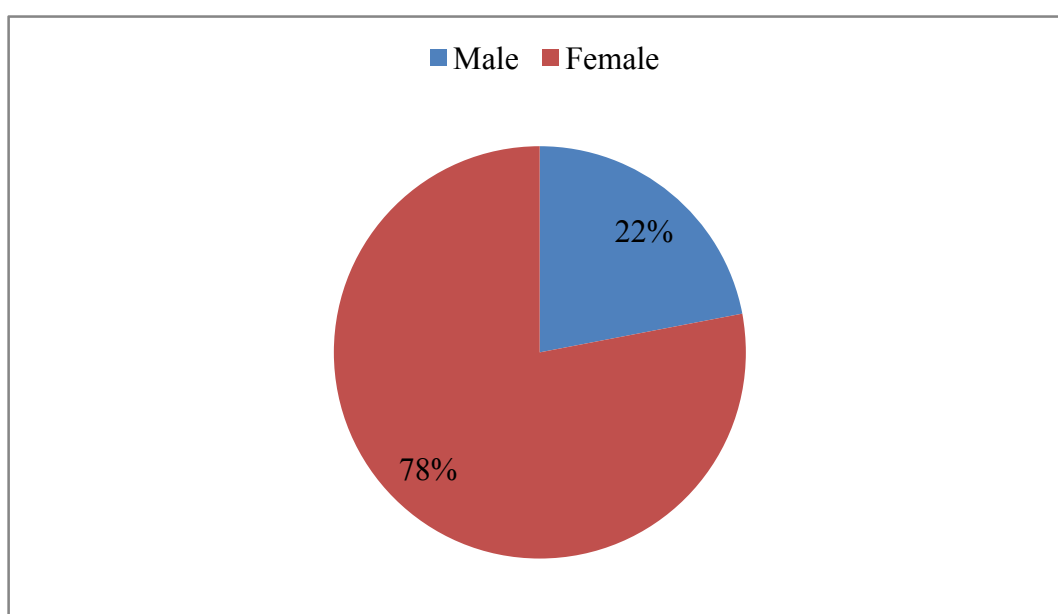


Figure1: Students' gender

Table one shows that the target population consists of 39 female and 11 male. We can say that the highest percentage (78%) is related to the Females, while only (22%) of the participants are Males. This means that females are more interested in learning the foreign language than males.

Q2: Age

a-20-25

b-25-30

c-More than 30

Option	Number	Percentage
a	49	98
b	1	2
c	0	0
Total	50	100

Table 2: Students' age

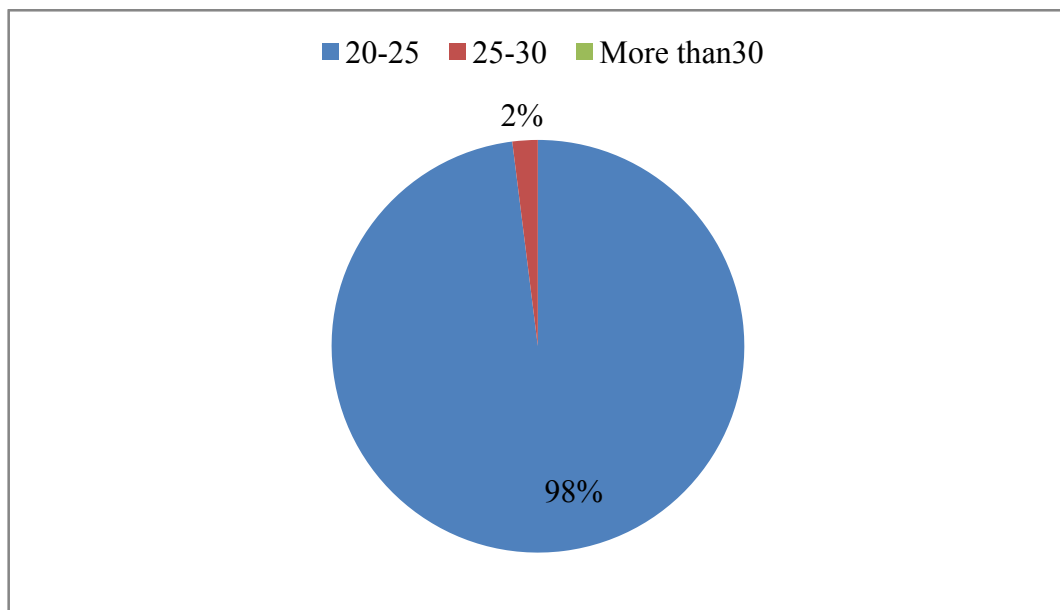


Figure 2: Students' age

According to the results shown in the table above, we notice that (98%) of the students are between 20-25, while (2%) of the students are between 25 and 30; however, there is no student more than 30 years old.

Q3: Was English your own choice?

a-Yes

b-No

Option	Number	Percentage
a	45	90
b	5	10
Total	50	100

Table 3: Students' choice for studying English

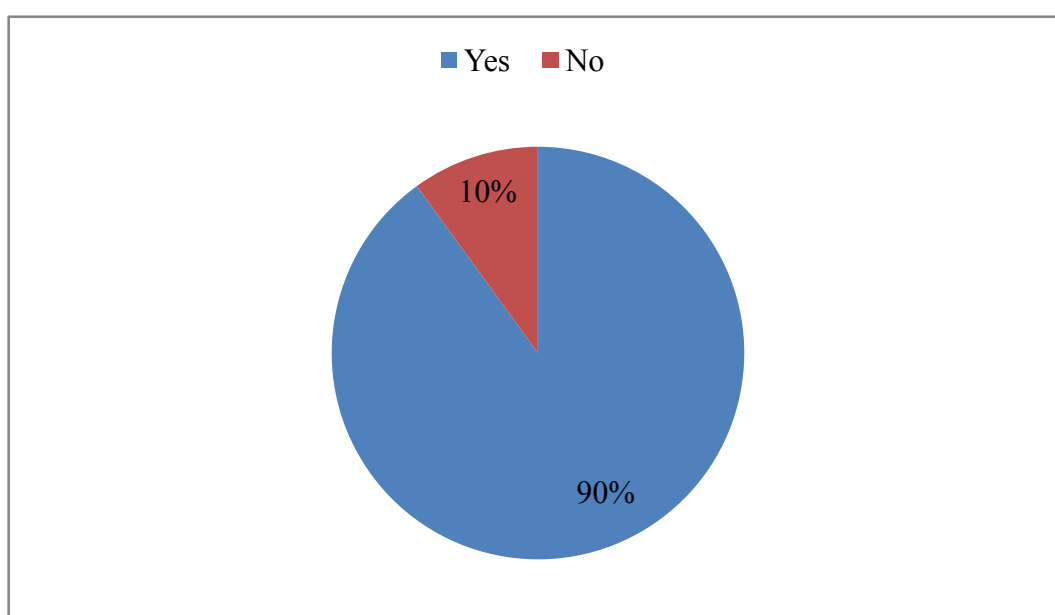


Figure 3: Students' choices for studying English

Forty five participants, making up (90%), opted for “yes”, while only five participants; i.e. (10%) opted for “no”. This question was asked to know the students' attitude towards learning English.

Q4: How do you assess your present level at English?

a-Excellent

b-Good

c-Average

d-Poor

Option	Number	Percentage
a	2	4
b	22	44
c	26	52
d	0	0
Total	50	100

Table 4: Students' level at English

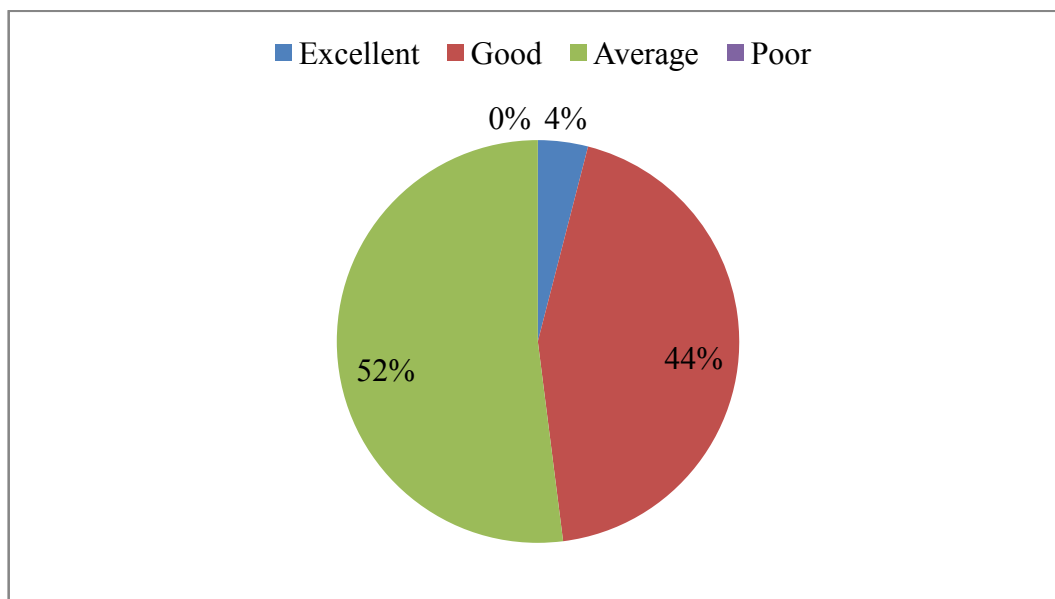


Figure 4 : Students' level at English

The analysis of the results reveals that (52%) of the students see that their level at English is average; however, (44%) of the students think that they are good at English, and just (4%) of the students consider themselves as Excellent learners. Hence, no one considers his level at English as poor.

Q5: Do you like English language?

a-very much

b-not much

Option	Number	Percentage
a	42	84
b	8	16
Total	50	100

Table 5: The students' Feelings towards the English language

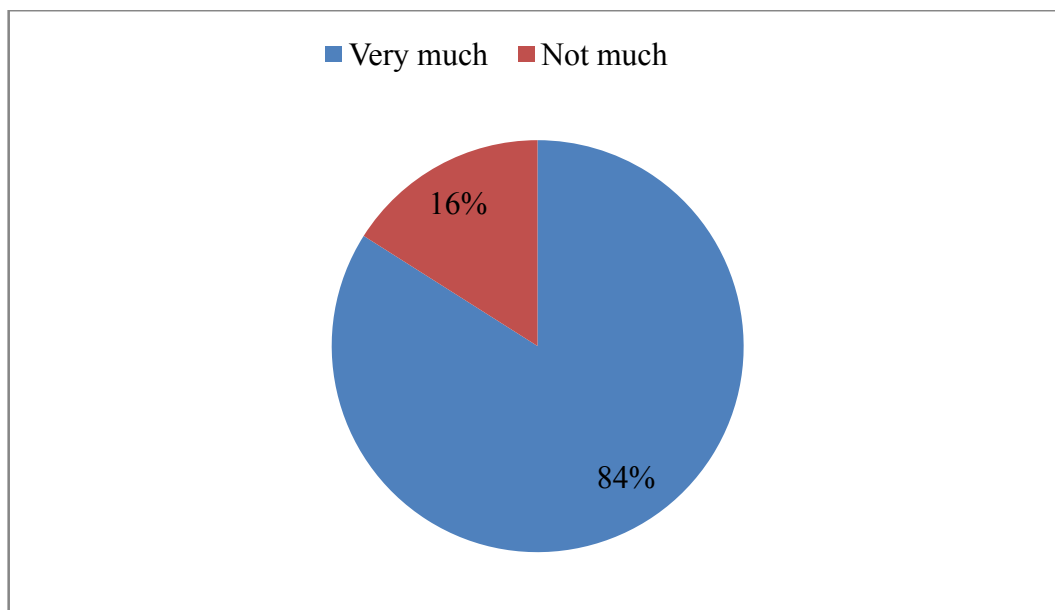


Figure 5: The students' feelings towards the English language

(84%) of the whole population affirmed that they like English very much, this confirms that 42 students are interested in learning the English language. Only eight participants (16%) affirm that they do not like English much.

Section Two: Students' attitude towards the Speaking Skill

Q6: Do you think that speaking English is?

a-Difficult

b-Easy

Option	Number	Percentage
a	17	34
b	33	66
Total	50	100

Table 6: Students' attitude towards speaking

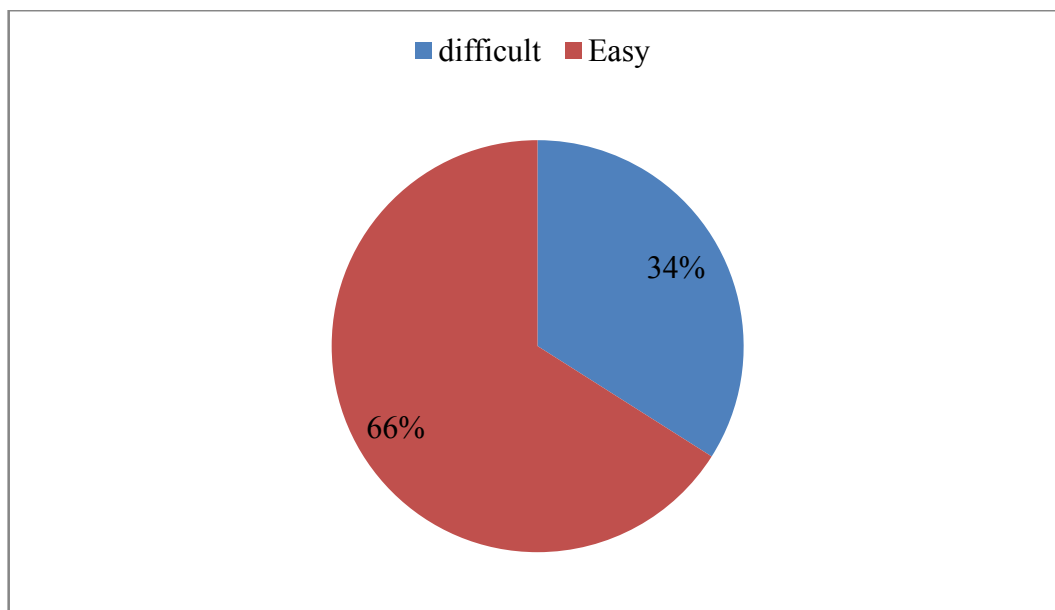


Figure 6: Students' attitude towards speaking

Table six shows that (66%) of the students think that speaking English is easy, while (34%) of the students answer that speaking English is difficult.

Q7: How often do you face difficulties when you speak?

- a-Usually
- b-Sometimes
- c-Rarely
- d-Never

Option	Number	Percentage
a	7	14
b	39	78
c	4	8
d	0	0
Total	50	100

Table 7: Perceptions to the amount of difficulties that students face while speaking

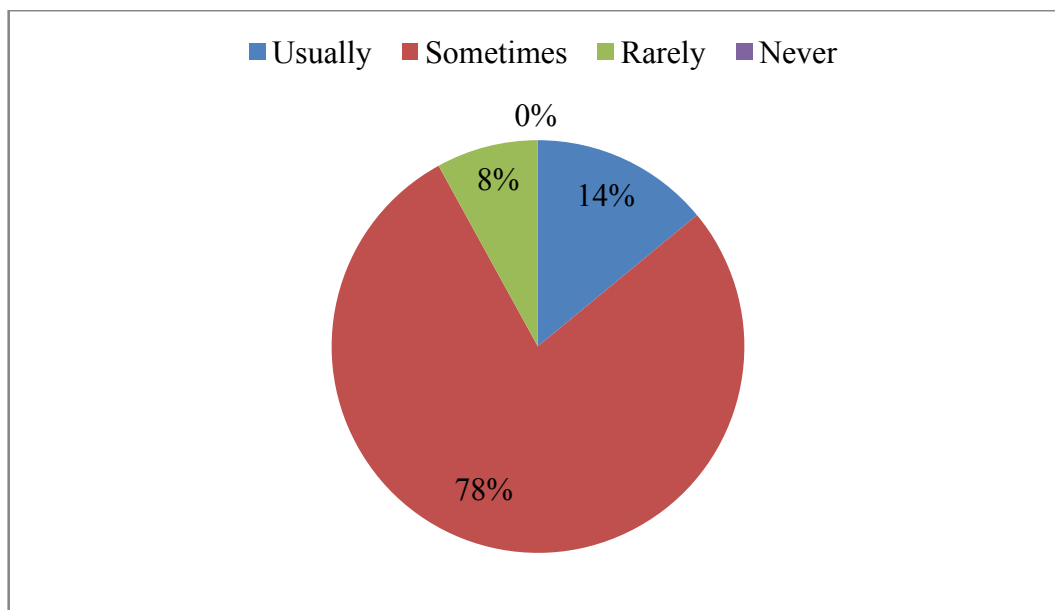


Figure 7: Perceptions to the amount of difficulties that students face while speaking

The results obtained in the table above reveal that the highest percentage (78%) is related to the option sometimes; in addition, (14%) is related to the option usually. The lowest percentage (8%) is connected to the option rarely. Hence, all students agree that they face difficulties when they speak.

Q8: How often do you talk in English outside the classroom?

- a-Often
- b-Sometimes
- c-Rarely
- d-Never

Option	Number	Percentage
a	6	12
b	36	72
c	8	16
d	0	0
Total	50	100

Table 8: The amount of students' time participation outside the classroom

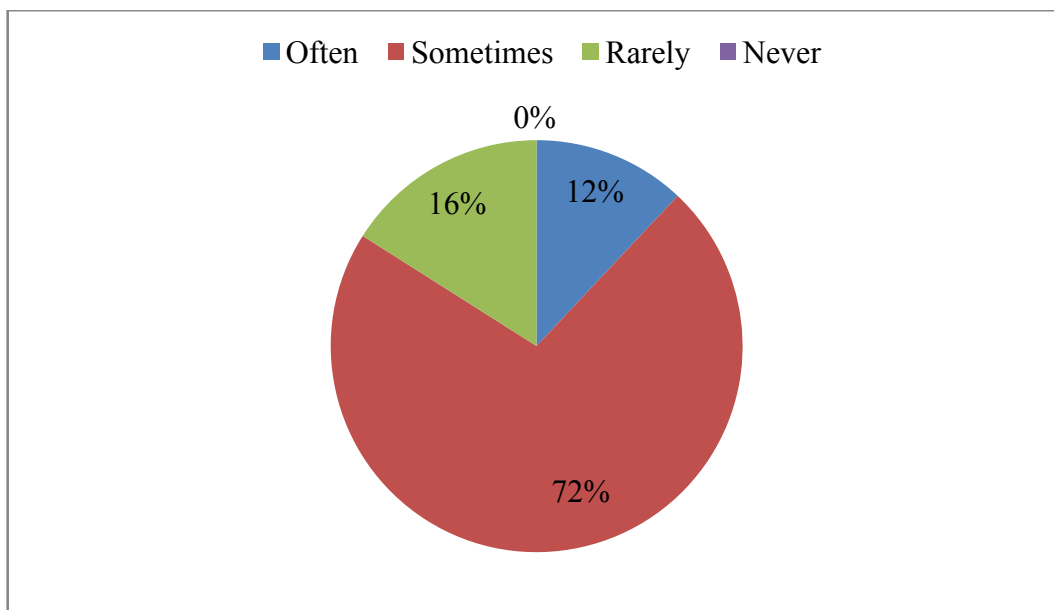


Figure 8: The amount of students' time participation outside the classroom

The table above indicates that (72%) of the students sometimes speak outside the classroom and (16%) of the students rarely speak outside the classroom. Just (12%) of the students often speak outside the classroom. Depending on these results, we notice that all students speak in English outside the classroom.

Q9: How often do you participate in the Oral Expression class?

- a-Always
- b-Sometimes
- c-Rarely
- d-Never

Option	Number	Percentage
a	32	64
b	16	32
c	2	4
d	0	0
Total	50	100

Table 9: Classroom participation

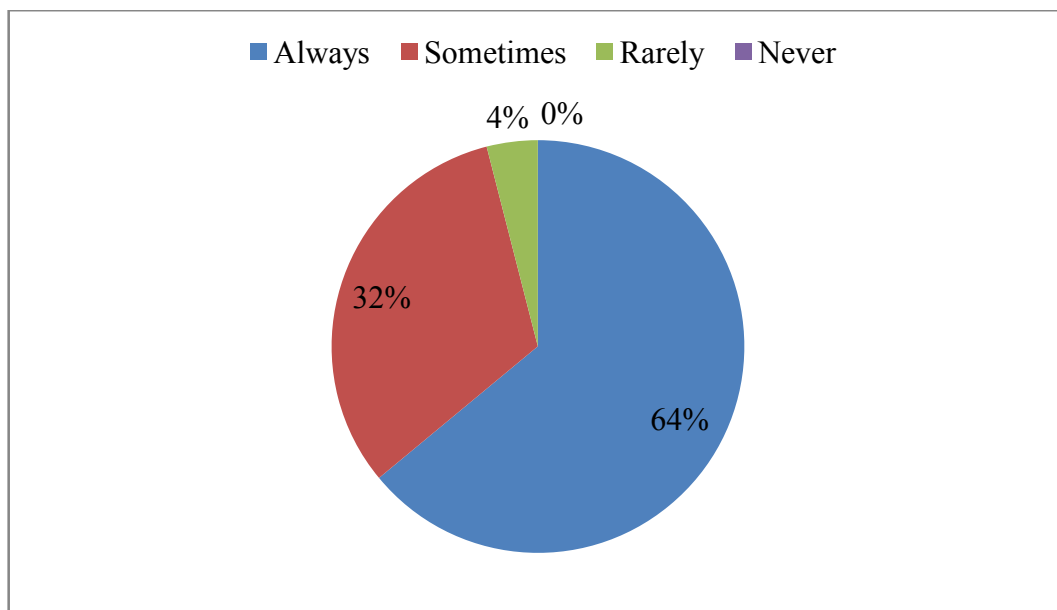


Figure 9: Classroom participation

Most of the students answer with always (64%), while (32%) of the students sometimes participate in the classroom. Just, (4%) of the students rarely participate. So, we notice that all students participate in the Oral Expression class.

Q10: Do you feel comfortable in the Oral Expression class?

a-Yes

b-No

Option	Number	Percentage
a	40	80
b	10	20
Total	50	100

Table 10: Whether students feel comfortable in the Oral Expression class

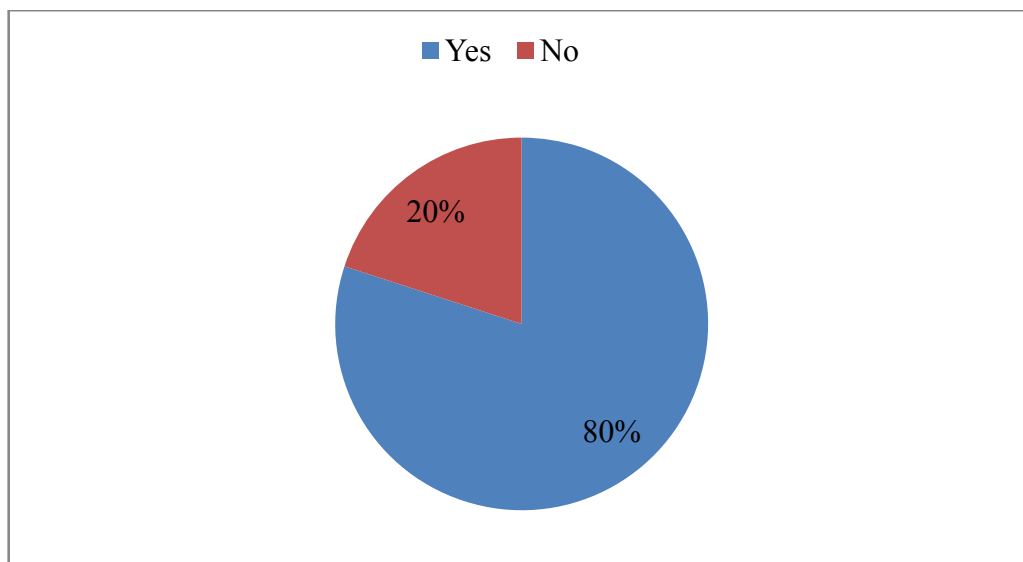


Figure 10: Whether students feel comfortable in the Oral Expression class

The results from the table above indicate that (80%) of the students feel comfortable in the oral classes, however; only (20%) of the students feel uncomfortable. Thus, the majority of the students feel comfortable.

If no, please say why?

Justification

From those who said no (20%) justify their answers as follows:

- Feeling anxious, shyness, and stress in the Oral Expression.
- Being afraid of making mistakes.
- Feeling that they are not motivated.

-Methods that are used by teachers were not appropriate; also they do not give the students enough time to express their views, feelings and ideas.

Q11: Does your teacher encourage you to talk?

a-Yes

b-No

Option	Number	Percentage
a	49	98
b	1	2
Total	50	100

Table 11: Perceptions to teachers' encouragement for students to talk

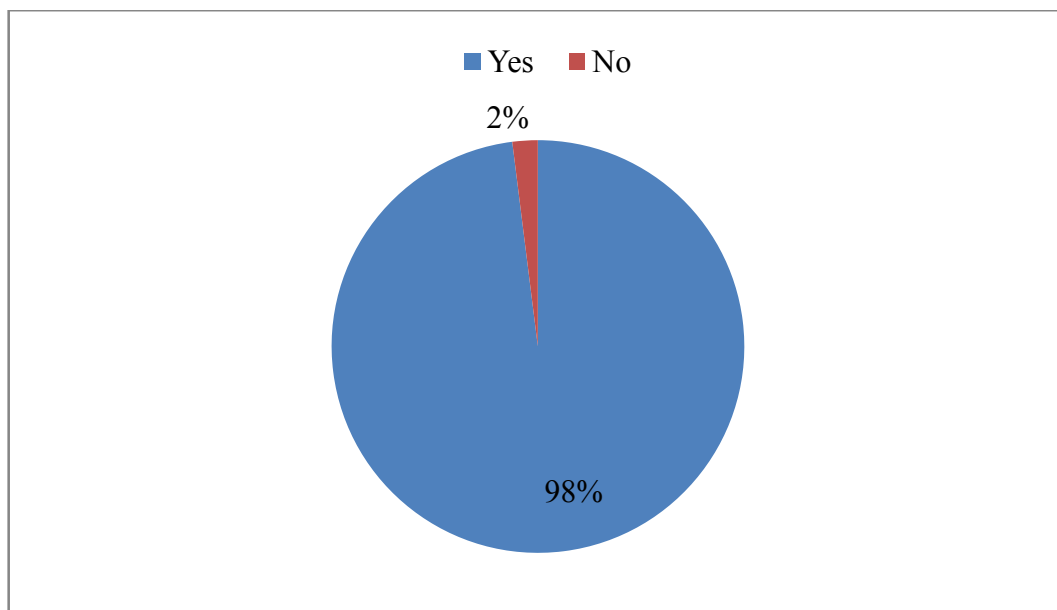


Figure 11: Perceptions to teachers' encouragement for students to talk

The students' responses indicate that the highest percentage (98%) are encouraged by their teachers to talk however, only (2%) of the students are not encouraged. Therefore, these results show that approximately all students tend to have a great support from their teachers to talk, just one student who does not.

Section Three: Students' attitude towards cooperative language learning

Q12: Do you prefer working?

- a-In groups
- b-In pairs
- c-Individually

Option	Number	Percentage
a	24	48
b	12	24
c	14	28
Total	50	100

Table 12: The way learners work in the classroom

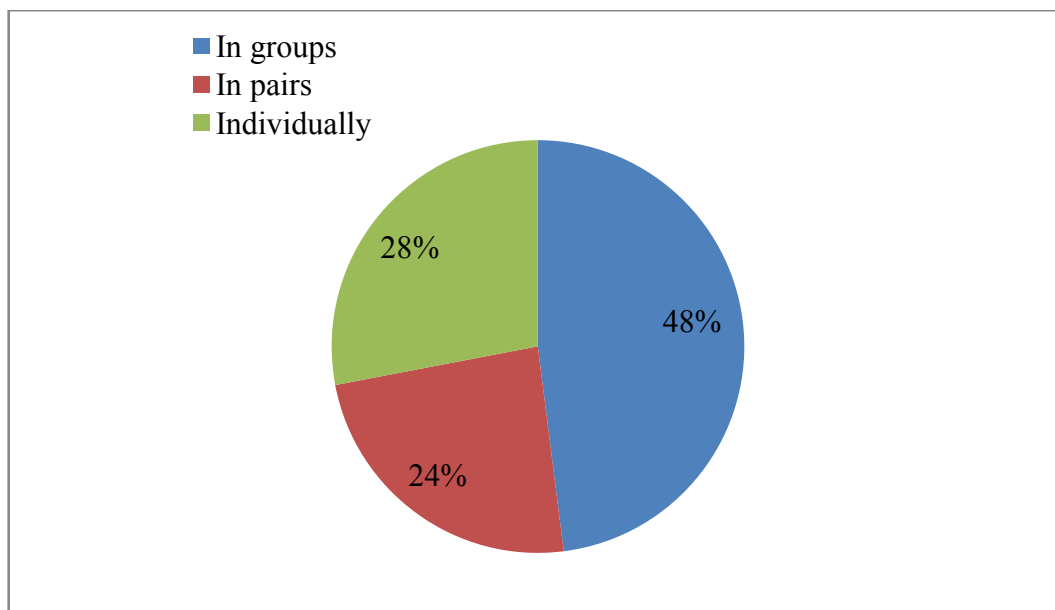


Figure 12: The way learners work in the classroom

From the results above, we notice that the majority has indicated that they prefer having group work instead of other types of tasks. These are 24 students which represent (48%). Fourteen participants, however; are opted to work individually (i.e. 28%), and only (24%) prefer working in pairs.

Q13: How often does the teacher engage you to work in groups?

- a-Always
- b-Sometimes
- c-Rarely
- d-Never

Option	Number	Percentage
a	11	22
b	37	74
c	2	4
d	0	0
Total	50	100

Table 13: Frequency of students' engagement to work in groups

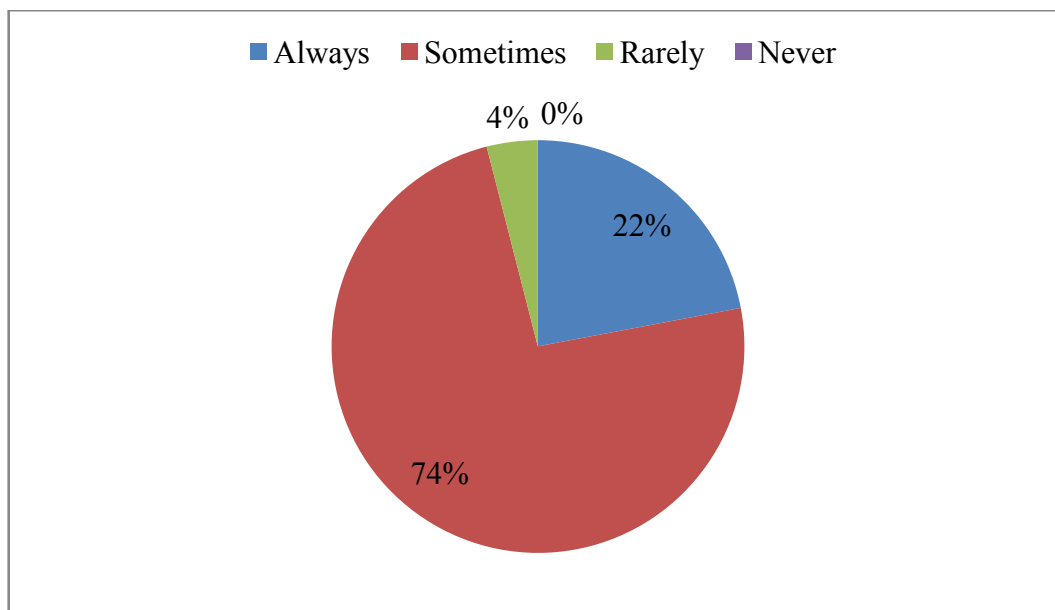


Figure 13: Frequency of students' engagement to work in groups

The greatest percentage (74%) demonstrates that teachers sometimes engage their students in groups, besides to there is (22%) of the students who always being engaged by the teacher. While only (4%) of the students confirm that their teachers rarely engage them to work in groups. On the other hand, there is no one chose the option never; this indicates that all of the students are engaged by the teacher to work in groups.

Q14: In your opinion, working in groups is effective?

a-Yes

b-No

Option	Number	Percentage
a	47	94
b	3	6
Total	50	100

Table 14: Opinions about cooperative learning

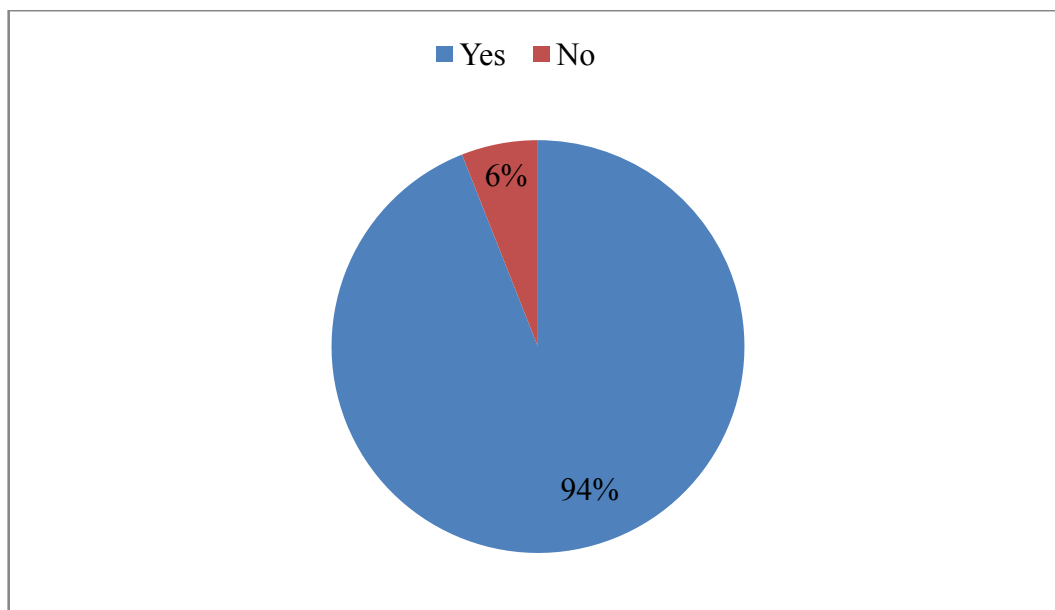


Figure 14: Opinions about cooperative learning

The results shown in the table above indicate that the majority of the students (94%) think that working in groups is effective, while only (6%) of the students believe that cooperative group work is not effective.

Q15: How do you feel when working in groups?

- a-Comfortable
- b-Motivated
- c-Nervous

Option	Number	Percentage
a	14	28
b	30	60
c	6	12
Total	50	100

Table 15: Students' feelings towards working in groups

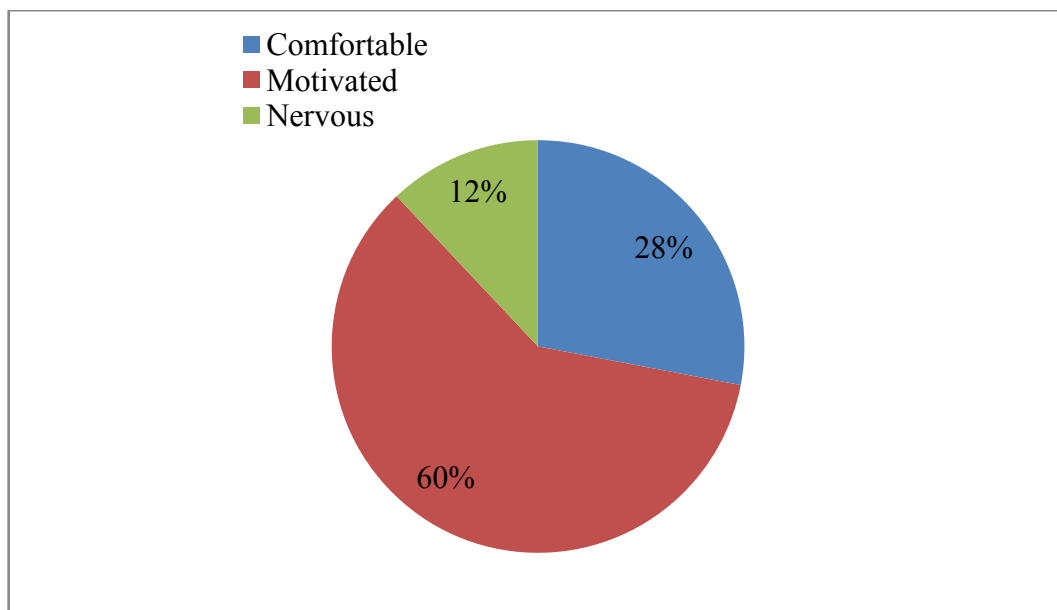


Figure 15: Students' feelings towards working in groups

The results presented in the table above show that the highest percentage (60%) of the students are motivated, while (28%) of the students feel comfortable. Only (12%) of them feel nervous when working in groups.

Q16: Do you think that working in groups will improve your speaking skill?

a-Yes

b-No

Option	Number	Percentage
a	37	74
b	13	26
Total	50	100

Table 16: Students' evaluation of cooperative learning

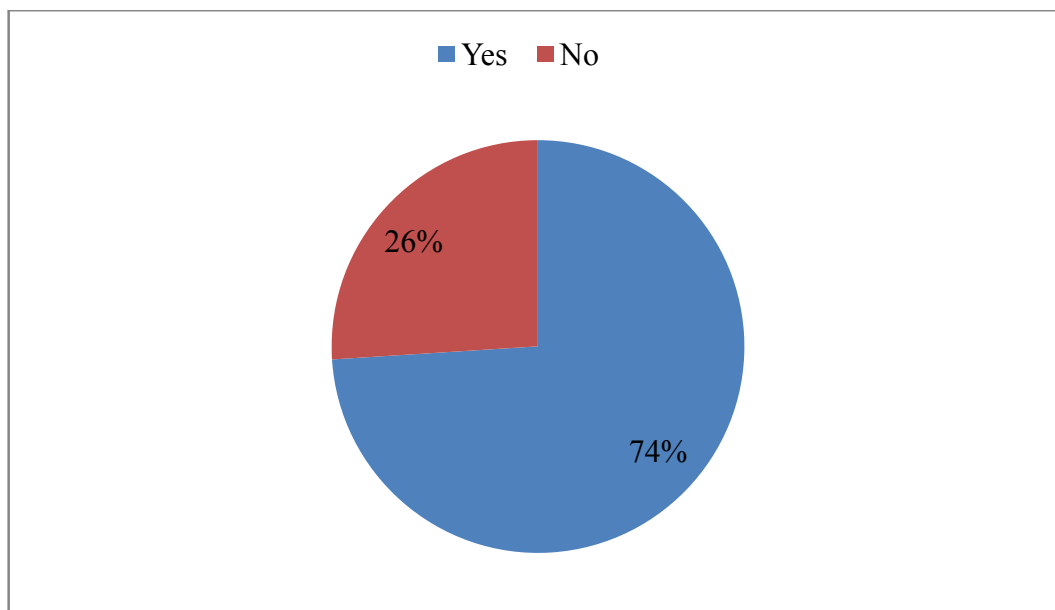


Figure 16: Students' evaluation of cooperative learning

The examination of the table above reveals that 37 students (74%) believe that cooperative work improves students' speaking skill. In comparison, 13 students (26%) have answered negatively; they think that working in groups does not improve their speaking skill.

If yes, please say why?

Justification

From those who said yes (74%) justify their answer as follows:

- Through working in groups, they will have a chance to exchange ideas, discover their mistakes, and enrich their vocabulary.
- Acquire knowledge and skills.
- They learn from each other.
- Their motivation increased.
- They will have opportunities to participate in the classroom.
- Get rid from anxiety.

1.4. Discussion of the Results

All in all, the analysis of the results shows that the chosen sample contains more females (78%) than males (22%). This indicates that females are more interested in learning the foreign language. In addition, studying English was their own choice; this confirms that they like English very much (see Q5). The results also reveal that most of the second year students are average learners and they are between 20 and 25 years old.

The analysis also shows that EFL learners sometimes speak in English outside the classroom. In addition, they always participate in the Oral Expression class, and this makes them feel comfortable in oral classes, that's why they consider speaking English as an easy task; however, they sometimes face difficulties in it. Besides to that, students declare that their teachers encourage and engage them to work in groups, that's why they prefer to work in groups in which they feel motivated. Finally, the vast majority agreed on the effectiveness of working in groups i.e. they believe that cooperative learning technique improves their speaking skill. Thus, our hypothesis is confirmed.

2. Analysis and Interpretation of the Teachers' Questionnaire

2.1. The Sample

The second sample of this research consists of five (5) EFL University teachers were chosen among the total number of Oral Expression teachers' population (17) at the University of Mohammed Kheither, Biskra. Most of the teachers have been teaching English for at least eight years. Their experience in teaching English at University helped them to give their views confidently. This sample comprises four (04) females and one (01) male. In addition, our target population is narrowed to the Oral Expression teachers because our research deals with improving EFL learners' speaking skill during Oral Expression courses.

2.2. Description of the Questionnaire

The Questionnaire was designed to explore the EFL teachers' knowledge, opinions, experience, and perceptions on developing students 'oral performance through using cooperative learning technique. The Questionnaire consists of 15 questions which are grouped into three main sections:

Section One: Aims to gather information about the teachers' background. It consists of three questions: one addresses the teachers' gender, the second is about the teachers' qualifications, and the last one is about the teachers' years of experience.

Section Two: this section contains four (04) closed ended questions and two (02) open ended questions.

Section Three: this section comprises five (05) open ended questions and one (01) closed ended question.

2.3. Analysis of the Results:

Teachers' Questionnaire

Section One: Background Information

Q1: Gender

a-Male

b-Female

Option	Number	Percentage%
a	1	20
b	4	80
Total	5	100

Table 17: Teachers' gender

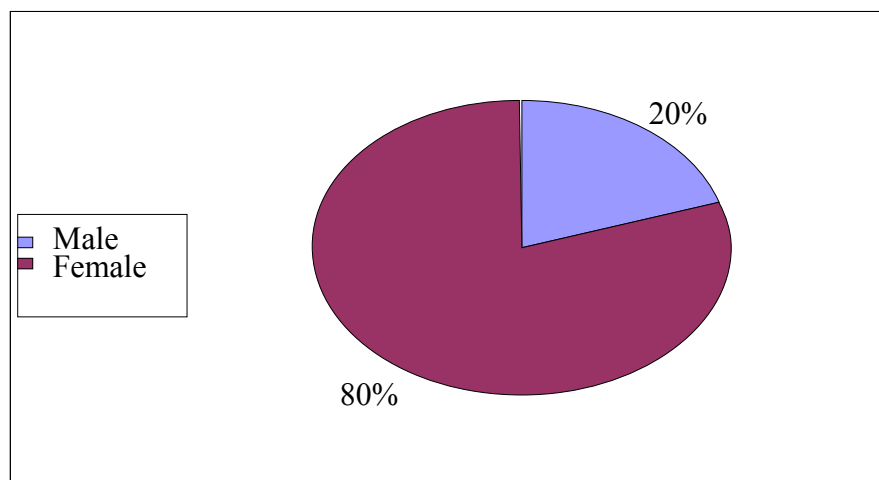


Figure 17: Teachers' gender

The table above indicates that the target population consists of (04) females and (01) one male. Depending on these results, we notice that females are more than males. Thus, teachers' gender does not influence the results of the research.

Q2: Degrees and qualifications:

a-Licence

b-Magister

c-Master

d-P.h.D

Option	Number	Percentage %
a	1	20
b	3	60
c	0	0
d	1	20
Total	5	100

Table 18: Teachers' qualifications

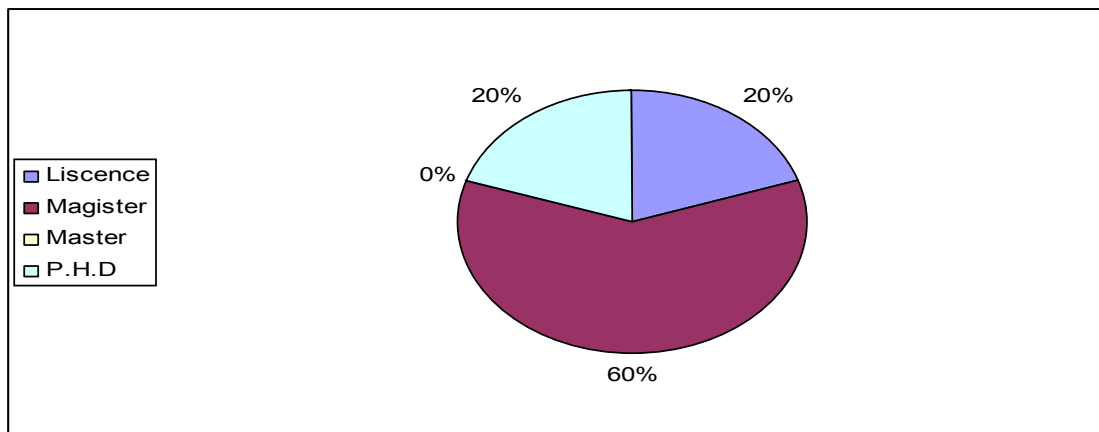


Figure 18: Teachers' qualifications

The results shown in the table above indicate that the highest percentage (60%) of teachers have Magister degree, and (20%) of them have Liscence degree. Another (20%) of teachers have P.h.D degree. So, the results reveal that no one has Master degree.

Q3: How long have you been teaching English at University?

a-0-5 years

b-5-10 years

c-More than 10 years.

Option	Number	Percentage%
a	1	20
b	3	60
c	1	20
Total	5	100

Table 19: Teachers' years of experience of teaching English

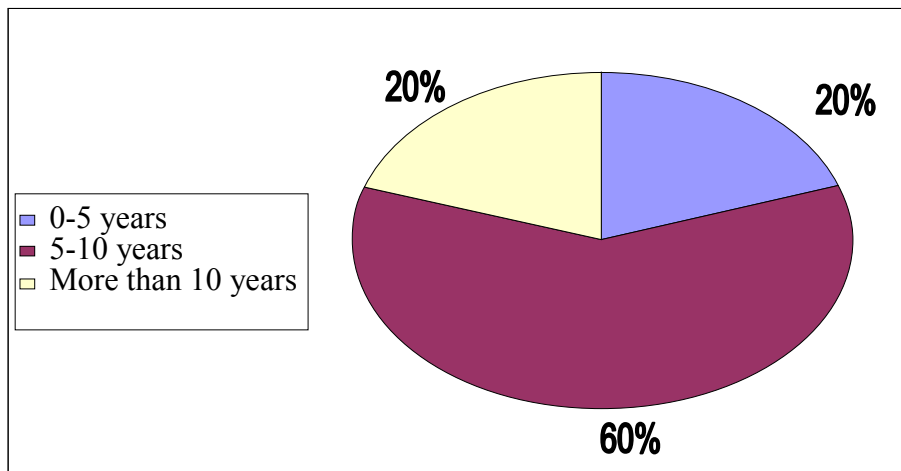


Figure 19: Teachers' years of experience of teaching English

The results in the table above shown that (60%) of the teachers have been teaching English between 5-10 years; however, (20%) of the teachers have been teaching English between 0-5 years. In addition, another (20%) of the University teachers have been teaching for more than 10 years. Thus, the majority of teachers have a large experience in teaching English.

Section Two: Cooperative Learning

Q4: Do you make your learners work?

- a- In groups
- b- In pairs
- d-Individually

Option	Number	Percentage%
a	3	60
b	1	20
c	1	20
Total	5	100

Table 20: Classroom management

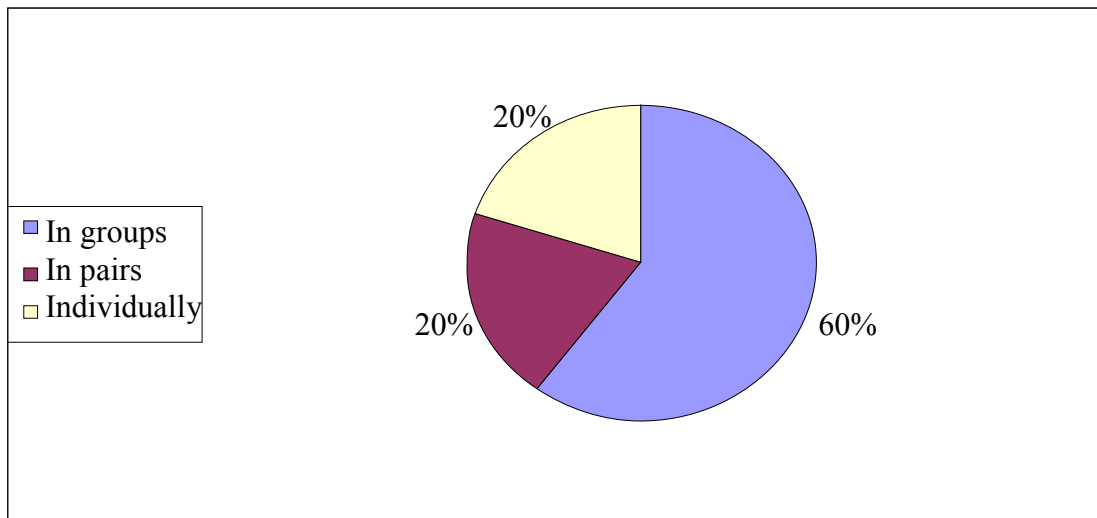


Figure 20: Classroom management

The results obtained in the table above indicate that (60%) of the teachers make their learners work in groups, and (20%) of them make the learners work in pairs. In addition, another (20%) of the teachers prefer to arrange their learners to work individually.

Q5: How often do you use cooperative group work?

- a- Always
- b- Sometimes
- c- Never

Option	Number	Percentage%
a	3	60
b	2	40
c	0	00
Total	5	100

Table 21: Teachers' frequency of using cooperative group work

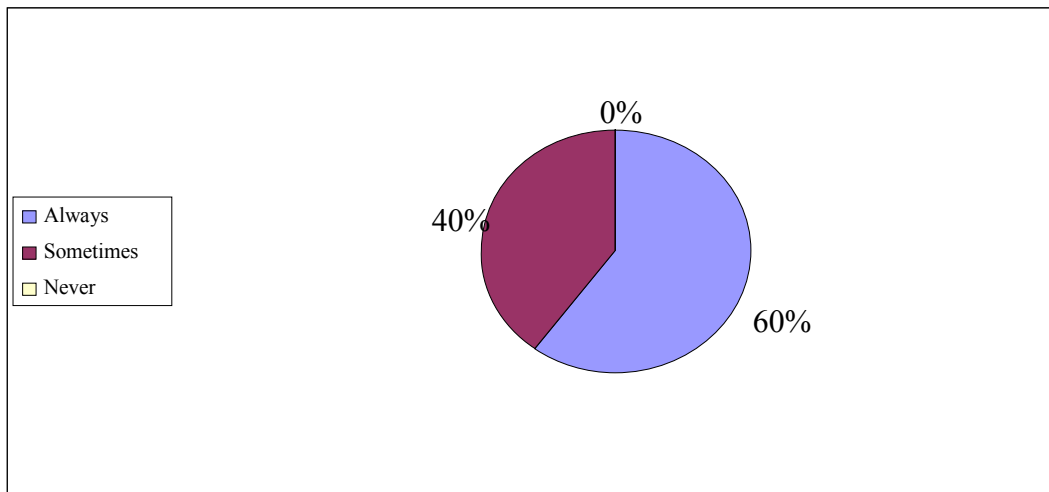


Figure 21: Teachers' frequency of using cooperative group work

According to the table above, we notice that the majority of teachers (60%) always use cooperative group work in the classroom, while some of them (40%) sometimes use it. These results indicate that all of the teachers implement cooperative learning technique in the classroom.

Q6: How do you find your students when working in groups?

- a- Interested
- b- Motivated
- c- Noisy

Option	Number	Percentage%
a	1	20
b	3	60
c	1	20
Total	5	100

Table 22: Teachers' opinions about students when working in groups

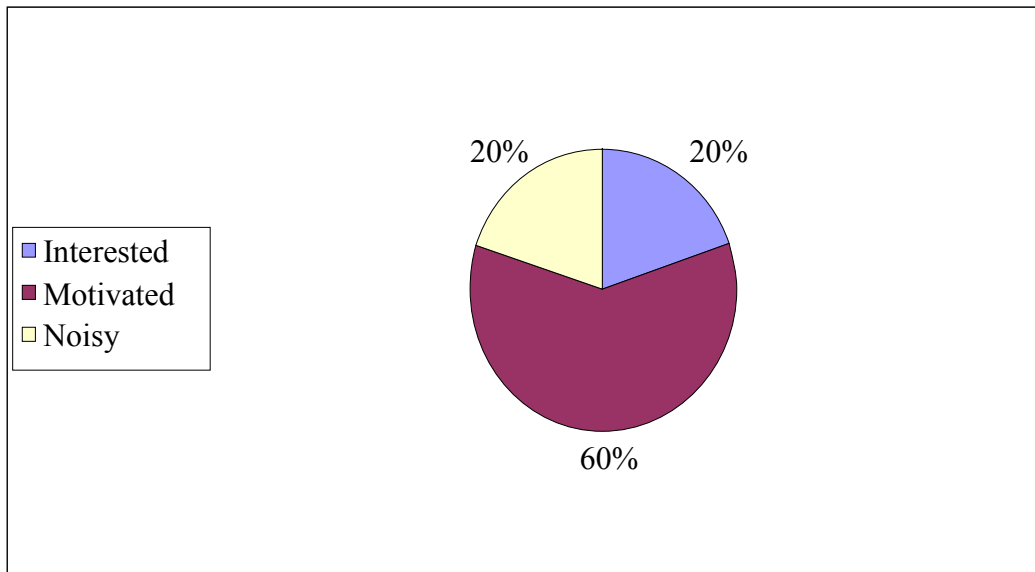


Figure 22: Teachers' opinions about students when working in groups

Depending on the results shown in the table above, we notice that (60%) of the teachers find their students motivated when they are working in groups. On the other hand, (20%) of them see that learners are interested in working in group, in addition (20%) of teachers think that students are noisy when they work in groups.

Q7: Your students' speaking skill will be developed if they perform tasks:

- a-Individually
- b-In groups
- c- In pairs

Option	Number	Percentage%
a	1	20
b	3	60
c	1	20
Total	5	100

Table 23: Teachers' perceptions to the way the students perform tasks to develop their speaking skill

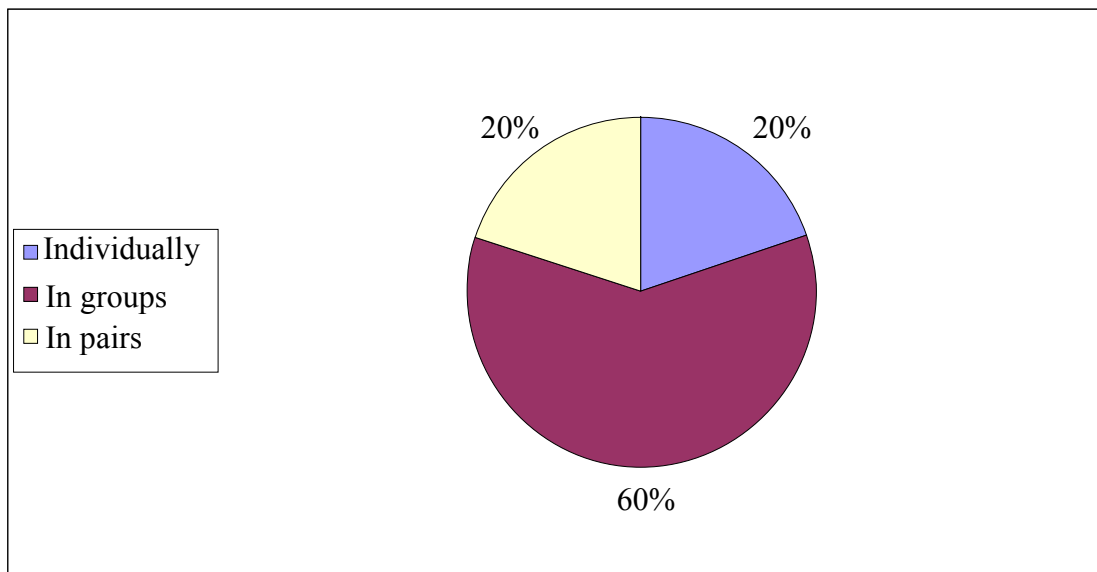


Figure 23: Teachers' perceptions to the way the students perform tasks to develop their speaking skill

The results in the table above shown that (60%) of the teachers confirm that students' speaking skill will be developed if they perform tasks in groups. On the other hand, some of them (20%) think that through pair work, learners can improve their oral performance. In addition, (20%) of the teachers see that when students perform tasks individually, their speaking skill will be improved.

Q8: Do you think that cooperative learning is beneficial?

a-Yes

b-No

Option	Number	Percentage%
a	5	100
b	0	00
Total	5	100

Table 24: Opinions about cooperative learning

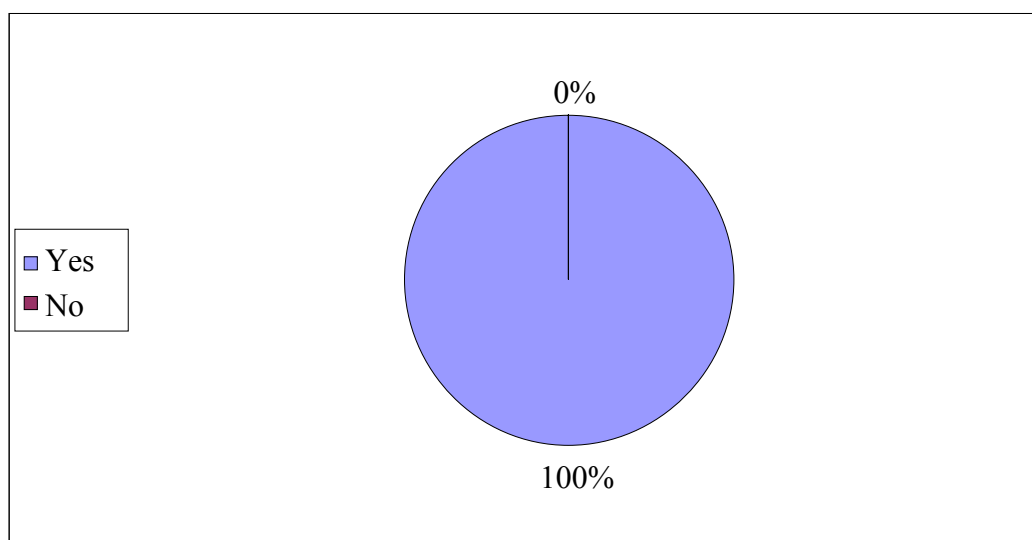


Figure 24: Opinions about cooperative learning

The table above indicates that all the teachers (100%) believe that cooperative learning is beneficial. So, there is a total agreement on the importance of cooperative learning.

If yes, please say why?

Those who said yes (100%) justify their answers as follows:

- Cooperative learning fosters the sense of sharing and develops communicative abilities.
- It motivates learners to develop their skills, also makes them able to get rid of shyness and stress.
- Students will practice a kind freedom to say what they want in a friendly mood, and get rid of their psychological barriers
- It helps them to exchange ideas, share experiences, and ask themselves questions with a higher confidence than with the teacher. Students are not afraid to make mistakes in front of each other and they are more at ease to speak and interact.

Q9: Do you often implement it when teaching the speaking skill?

a-Yes

b-No

Option	Number	Percentage%
a	5	100
b	0	00
Total	5	100

Table 25: Teachers' application of cooperative group work in teaching the speaking skill

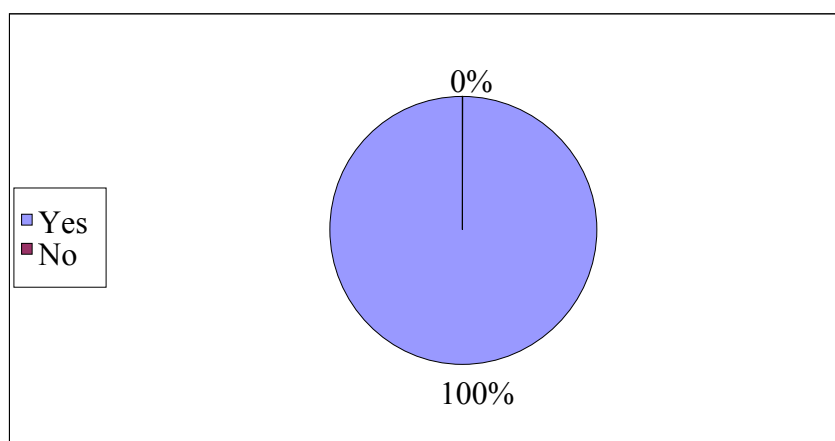


Figure 25: Teachers' application of cooperative group work in teaching the speaking skill

The results shown in the table above indicate that all the teachers (100%) apply cooperative learning technique to teach the speaking skill. Hence, all the teachers agree that cooperative learning is the appropriate strategy for teaching speaking.

If yes, please justify

Justification

Those who said yes justify their answers as follows:

- It is an appropriate technique to motivate especially shy/anscious students who are generally uncomfortable in front of the teacher or the whole class, but when being in small group it is easier for them to ask for help, to try things without the fear of loosing face and being laughed at.
- It is very beneficial in teaching speaking because it helps learners to improve their speaking proficiency.
- Through this technique, the teacher tries to teach the spirit of the team work and lets them know how to be an active and leading member in the community.

Section Three: Speaking Skill

Q10: Do you like teach the Oral Expression course?

a-Yes

b-No

Option	Number	Percentage%
a	5	100
b	0	00
Total	5	100

Table 26: Teachers' feeling towards teaching the Oral Expression course

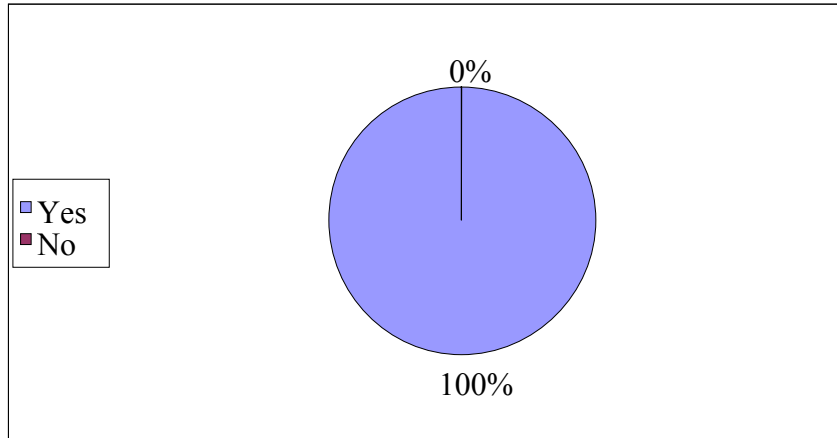


Figure 26: Teachers' feeling towards teaching the Oral Expression course

From the table above, we notice that all the teachers (100%) like to teach the Oral Expression course.

Q11: According to you, is it difficult to teach the Oral Expression to EFL learners?

a-Yes

b-No

Option	Number	Percentage%
a	5	100
b	0	00
Total	5	100

Table 27: Teachers' opinions towards the easiness or difficulty to teach the Oral Expression to EFL learners

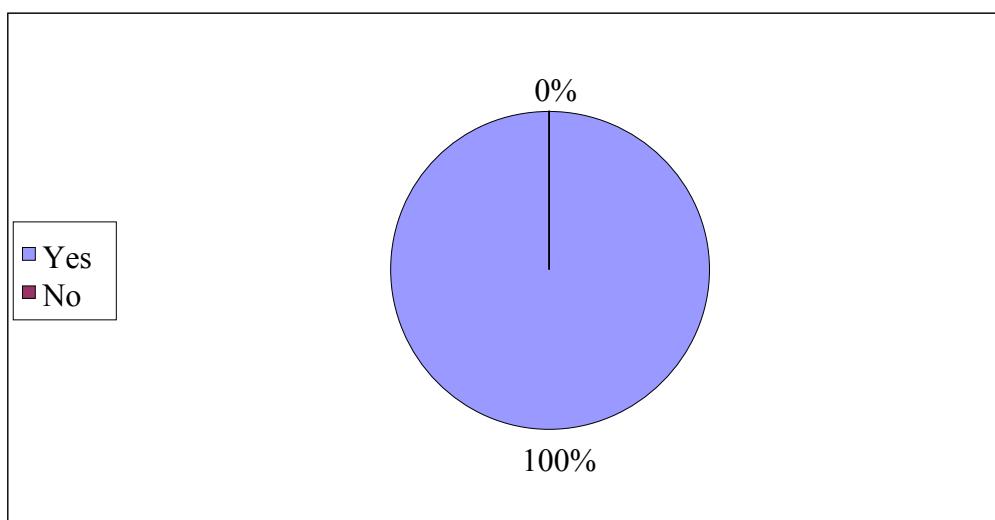


Figure 27: Teachers' opinions towards the easiness or difficulty to teach the Oral Expression to EFL learners

The table above indicates that all the teachers (100%) believe that teaching Oral Expression is difficult.

If yes, what difficulties do you face during teaching that module?

According to all the teachers, the difficulties that they may face during teaching the Oral Expression to EFL learners are:

- Lack of interest and motivation.
- Large classes.
- Students' lack of participation.
- Lack of materials.
- The students' level.
- They have no background before.
- They have no self-confidence.
- It is hard to cope with all levels especially low students.
- It is a challenge to find appropriate activities that suit all levels, and to choose the right techniques and materials.
- It is difficult to make shy students interact and participate.
- Speaking is hard to assess.

Q12: How often do your students participate in the Oral Expression?

- a- Always
- b-Sometimes
- c-Rarely
- d-Never

Option	Number	Percentage %
a	3	60
b	2	40
c	0	00
d	0	00
Total	5	100

Table 28: Teachers’ frequency to the amount of students’ participation in the Oral Expression

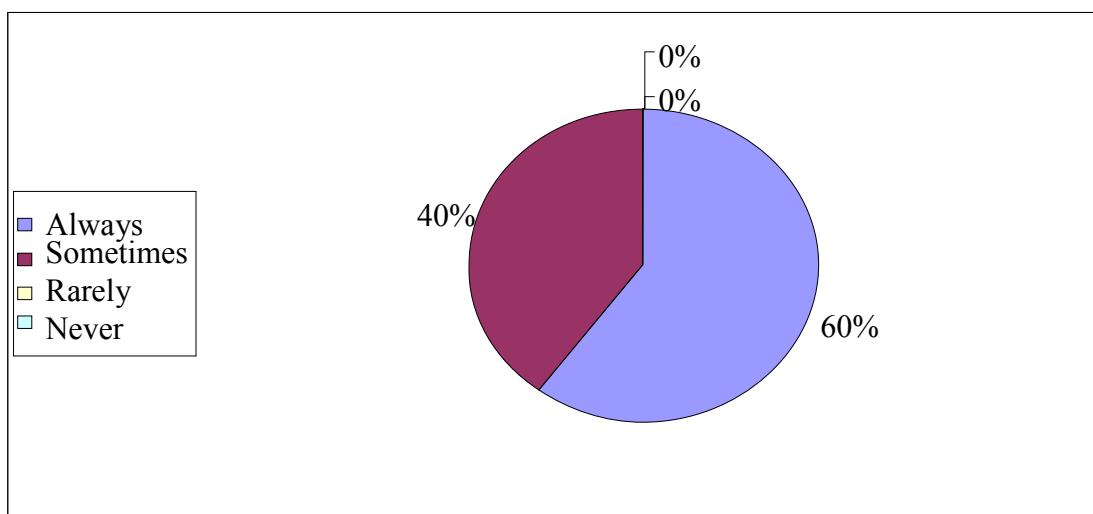


Figure 28: Teachers’ frequency to the amount of students’ participation in the Oral Expression

Depending on the results shown in the table above, we notice that the highest percentage (60%) of the teachers see that students “always” participate in Oral Expression. However, some of the teachers (40%) respond with “sometimes”. No one has chosen the option “rarely” or “never”.

Whatever your answer, please say why?

Those who answer “always”, they justify their answers as follows:

- They participate to develop their speaking skill and prove their existence in class as individual learners.
- Students are interested in enhancing their level.

- They participate to get good marks.

On the other hand some of them chose the option “sometimes”, they justify their answers as follows:

- Students keep silent, they claim having different constraints at different levels (pronunciation, accuracy, and the lack of vocabulary).
- In every class, there are good even very good elements who do not hesitate to speak at any occasion. Others; however, keep silent and speak only when asked/obliged (in a test; for example).

Q13: Is it possible to make all the students participate in the speaking activities?

a-Yes

b-No

Option	Number	Percentage%
a	2	40
b	3	60
Total	5	100

Table 29: The possibility of having all of the students participate in the speaking activities

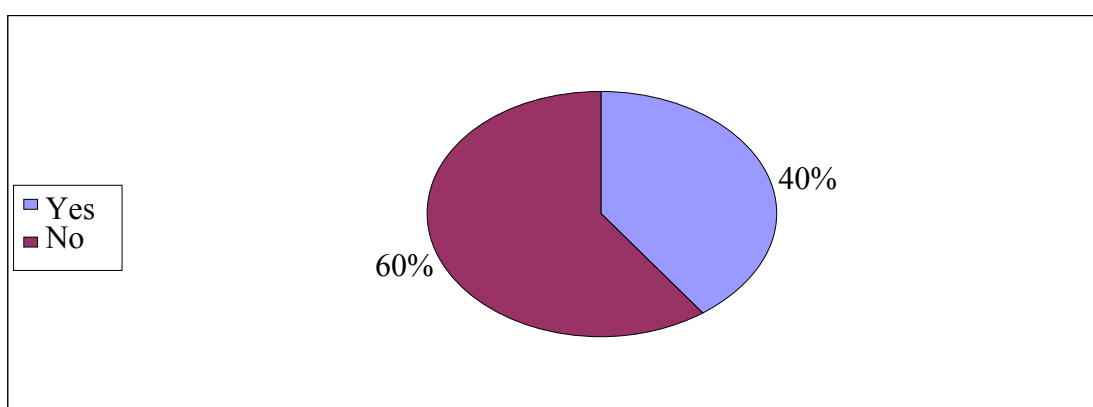


Figure 29: The possibility of having all of the students participate in the speaking activities

Depending on the results shown in the table above, we notice that (60%) of the teachers confirm that it is impossible to make all the students participate in the speaking activities. However, (40%) of the teachers state that it is possible to do that.

If yes, how?

Explanation

Teachers among those who say “yes” explain that it is possible to make all the students practice in the classroom as follows:

- By choosing motivating activities and interesting topics.
- Providing a friendly environment, and select the appropriate activities.
- Providing an authentic context.

Q14: In your opinion, what are the speaking problems that learners may face in the Oral Expression?

According to the teachers’ opinions, the following are the main speaking problems that may hinder the development of students’ oral production:

- Inhibition.
- Nothing to say.
- The use of the mother tongue.
- Anxiety and stress.
- Lack of self-confidence.
- Boredom/demotivation.
- Unfamiliarity with the topic.
- Low participation.
- Poor listening practice.

Q15: What do you suggest to improve students’ speaking skill?

According to the teachers’ opinions, we can improve students’ speaking skill through:

- Varying activities and techniques that stimulate their interests.
- Using audio-visual aids.
- Using cooperative learning technique (group work).
- Making them choose the topic they like to speak about.
- Promoting their motivation and autonomy to speak, and encouraging them to speak outside the classroom.
- Tolerating mistakes.

2.4. Discussion of the Results

The results of the teachers' questionnaire indicate that females' teachers are more than males. In addition, most of the teachers have Magister and P.h.D degrees, and this reveals that the majority of the teachers have a long experience in teaching. Also, the results show that in trying to teach the speaking skill to the learners, University teachers prefer to use cooperative learning technique in the classroom. They tend to implement it always, while others use it sometimes. In trying to use such activity, most of the teachers declare that the majority of the students are more motivated when working in groups. In addition, their oral performance will be developed; that's why most of the teachers believe that cooperative group work is beneficial. However, they consider teaching Oral Expression to EFL learners as a difficult task. Therefore, the majority of the students participate in the Oral Expression. Finally, the vast majority of the teachers believe on the effectiveness of cooperative learning technique in improving the students' speaking skill. Thus, our hypothesis is confirmed.

Conclusion

To conclude, the positive results revealed in this study concerning the influence of cooperative learning technique on developing students' oral performance have confirmed our hypothesis .This means that there is a positive relationship between cooperative learning and oral proficiency.

The results indicate that the use of small group work and other activities especially in the oral sessions play a fundamental role in improving communicative abilities.

Pedagogical Implications:

Based on the findings of this research, the following recommendations seem to be appropriate:

- Teachers should give their students more opportunities to be involved in the learning process in terms of selecting learning objectives, materials, and subjects depending on their weaknesses.
- Teachers should use the techniques of working in groups and encourage students to work cooperatively.

- The right selection of the activities plays a major role in motivating students to do the tasks.
- Teachers should encourage their learners to practice the language outside the classroom.
- Teachers should motivate students to participate in the classroom in order to enhance their oral production skill.
- Teachers should provide a real classroom atmosphere with the best learning environment.
- Teachers should give much importance to the speaking skill through designing discussion tasks which should meet the learners' needs, level, and interests.
- More time should be allocated to the Oral Expression in which the teachers can do their best to promote the learners' oral abilities.
- Students have to think about the purpose of speaking that will help them to deal better with the topic discussion.
- The students should speak and interact in the classroom to get rid of their shyness.
- Students should discuss their problems with the teacher whenever they find difficulties.

General Conclusion

We are going to the close of this study which highlights some important aspects of the process of foreign language teaching and learning. Through this research, we hypothesized that if we are going to improve the students' oral performance, we should provide them with more opportunities to use the language. We believe that the present application of cooperative learning technique to the field of language learning is essential for promoting oral performance because it creates a situation where learners work together to maximize their own learning.

The present study seeks to illustrate that learning a foreign language is not a matter of developing linguistic ability, but it requires improving the ability of communicating in different social contexts. If teachers apply cooperative learning technique in the classroom, learners' speaking skill will be developed. Indeed, cooperative learning helps learners to express themselves freely.

After analyzing students' and teachers' questionnaire, we come to the conclusion that most teachers and learners are aware of the fact that cooperative learning is a crucial factor in promoting communicative abilities. In addition, both teachers and students agree that cooperative learning is the appropriate technique in teaching the speaking skill. Moreover, the positive findings revealed in this study show that well-planned and organized cooperative group work is an effective technique for developing EFL learners' oral performance. Depending on these findings, we can say that our hypothesis is confirmed.

This study shows that **(a)** learners need to be provided with an effective instructional technique for improving the quality of learners' oral production; **(b)** the teacher's responsibility is to provide a relaxed and friendly situation where the learners are expected to use the target language without hesitation; and **(c)** both teachers and learners should be aware of the necessary skill for effective learning to take place. Overall, this study is useful not only for the learners helping them to improve their speaking and to teachers contributing to their understanding of the rules and the conditions necessary for effective learning. Future research should be done to test the applicability of the findings to larger population.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Students' Questionnaire

Appendix 2: Teachers' Questionnaire

APPENDIX 1
STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE

Appendix 1: Students' Questionnaire

Dear student,

I am investigating the issue of using the Cooperative Language Learning technique as a motivational factor in promoting students' speaking skill.

You are invited to take part by filling in the questionnaire below. Your contribution kept anonymous will be great help to me. You are kindly requested to answer the following questions by ticking (✓) the appropriate box or giving full answers whenever necessary.

Section One: Background Information

1. Gender:

a. Male

b. Female

2. Age:

a. 20-25

b. 25-30

c. More than 30

3. Was English your own choice?

a. Yes

b. No

4. How do you assess your present level at English?

a. Excellent

b. Good

c. Average

d. Poor

5. Do you like English language?

a. Very much

b. Not much

Section Two: Students' attitude towards the speaking skill

6. Do you think that speaking English is?

a. Difficult

b. Easy

7. How often do you face difficulties when you speak?

a. Usually

b. Sometimes

c. Rarely

d. Never

8. How often do you talk in English outside the classroom?

a. Often

b. Sometimes

c. Rarely

d. Never

9. How often do you participate in the Oral Expression class?

a. Always

b. Sometimes

c. Rarely

d. Never

10. Do you feel comfortable in the Oral Expression class?

a. Yes

b. No

If no, please say why?

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.....

.....

.....

11. Does your teacher encourage you to talk?

a. Yes

b. No

Section Three: Students' attitude towards cooperative language learning

12. Do you prefer working?

a. in groups

b. in pairs

c. individually

13. How often does the teacher engage you to work in groups?

a. Always

b. Sometimes

c. Rarely

d. Never

14. In your opinion, working in groups is effective?

a. Yes

b. No

15. How do you feel when working in groups?

a. Comfortable

b. Motivated

c. Nervous

16. Do you think that working in groups will improve your speaking skill?

a. Yes

b. No

If yes, please say why?

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APPENDIX 2
TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

Appendix 2: Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear teacher,

I am investigating the issue of using the Cooperative Language Learning technique as a motivational factor in promoting students' oral performance. You are invited to take part by filling in the questionnaire below. Your contribution kept anonymous will be great help to me. You are kindly requested to answer the following questions by ticking (√) the appropriate box or giving full answers in the space provided.

Section One: Background Information

1. Gender:

a. Male

b. Female

2. Degrees and qualifications:

a. License

b. Magister

c. Master

d. P.h.D

3. How long have you been teaching English at University?

a. 0-5 years

b. 5-10 years

c. More than 10 years

Section Two: Cooperative Learning

4. Do you make your learners work?

a. in groups

b. in pairs

c. Individually

5. How often do you use cooperative group work?

a. Always

b. Sometimes

c. Never

6. How do you find your students when working in groups?

a. Interested

b. Motivated

c. Noisy

7. Your students speaking skill will be developed if they perform tasks:

a. Individually

b. In groups

c. In pairs

8. Do you think that cooperative learning is beneficial?

a. Yes

b. No

If yes, please say why?

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9. Do you often implement it when teaching the speaking skill?

- a. Yes
- b. No

If yes, please justify

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.....

Section Three: Speaking Skill

10. Do you like teach the Oral Expression course?

- a. Yes
- b. No

11. According to you, is it difficult to teach Oral Expression to EFL learners?

- a. Yes
- b. No

If yes, what difficulties do you face during teaching that module?

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12. How often do your students participate in the Oral Expression?

- a. Always
- b. Sometimes
- c. Rarely
- d. Never

Whatever your answer, please say why?

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13. Is it possible to make all the students participate in the speaking activities?

- a. Yes
- b. No

If yes, how?

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14. In your opinion, what are the speaking problems that students may face in the Oral Expression?

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15. What do you suggest to improve students' speaking skill?

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ملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تطوير تقنية التعبير الشفوي لطلبة اللغة الانجليزية, كلية الآداب و اللغات الأجنبية, جامعة محمد خيذر, كما تهدف لبحث مدى استيعاب أساتذة اللغة الانجليزية للأسس والتطبيقات التي تقوم عليها تقنية التعبير الشفوي بطريقة العمل الجماعي. تعد هذه التقنية انجع طريقة لتطوير الأداء الشفوي لطلبة اللغة الانجليزية. كما تقوم هذه الدراسة على تبين أهمية و فعالية العمل الجماعي في مجال تعليم و تعلم اللغة الانجليزية. الفرضية التي اعتمدت في هذه الدراسة تبين أن تعلم اللغة الأجنبية عن طريق ممارسة اللغة و التمكن منها بتطبيق استراتيجيات العمل الجماعي يساهم فعلا في تحسين مستوى الطلبة في التعبير الشفوي. كما اعتمدنا على استبيانين , الأول موجه لطلبة السنة الثانية ال.ام.دي اختصاص اللغة الانجليزية, و الثاني إلى أساتذة التعبير الشفوي لقسم اللغة الانجليزية لسبر آرائهم حول تطبيق تقنية العمل الجماعي في مادة التعبير الشفوي.النتائج التي توصلنا إليها قد وضحت أن الطلبة و الأساتذة على دراية تامة بأهمية تطبيق هذه التقنية لتطوير الأداء الشفوي لطلبة اللغة الانجليزية , و هذا يثبت صحة فرضيتنا القائمة على تطبيق إستراتيجيات العمل الجماعي التعاوني لتعزيز هذا المبتغى .