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The Use of Cooperative Learning Strategies to Enhance Students' Writing Skill

Case of Study: Third Year Students of Biskra University

A dissertation Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master Degree in Science of The language

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Dedication

This work is dedicated to:

To My dear Mother Yasmina and My dear Father Ibrahim for their emotional

support and for instilling in me the value of learning. Words cannot

interpret my gratitude for their everlasting patience, understanding and

love.

To My beloved Brother and Sisters:

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Abstract

Teaching students how to develop writing skill and to help each other when working cooperatively is a significant factor to progress the quality of interaction and students level of achievement in writing. This study is an attempt to investigate and shed the light on the effects of implementing cooperative learning as a strategy to improve students writing proficiency. It aims at determining whether students writing skill would be developed through this strategy. Hence we hypothesize that if teachers of English use cooperative learning in the classroom, learners' writing skill will be enhanced. The descriptive method fit better in this study. Two questionnaires are used to collect the appropriate data. A students' questionnaire (N=50) students from third year classes and a teachers' questionnaire (N=05) teachers of written expression at the division of English at Mohammed Kheider Biskra University. The result of this study indicates that cooperative learning is an effective strategy in teaching writing skill as it has positive impact on students learning, developing writing skill and increasing the students motivation to write. In addition it investigates the value and the effectiveness of cooperative learning in classroom. Finally, a set of recommendations are suggested for both teachers and students to develop foreign language writing skill.

List of Abbreviation

FLL: Foreign Language Learning

EFL: English Foreign Language

FL: Foreign Language

STAD: Students Team Achievement Division

LMD: Licence, Master and Doctorate

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General Introduction

Nowadays, in the age of globalization, learning foreign languages has become a need for all people from around the world. Teaching and learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is one of the most significant subject in education. Generally, the main goal of teaching language is developing the four skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. This latter is one of the four skills that require special attention, more practice and more constructive feedback than all the other skills need as it is a productive language process. It is considered to be the most important and the most difficult skill because it needs a huge vocabulary, a good Grammar and a good awareness of the writing process. Writing proficiency plays a great role in conveying writing accurately and effectively. Unfortunately the majority of learners of English faced difficulties to write proficiently. This difficulty lies not only in generating and organizing ideas, but also in translating their ideas into readable text.

Teachers are in constant search of what may help their learners increase their level of writing proficiency. They provide many strategies, techniques and activities which may be individual or collaborative. In fact cooperative learning is a strategy that teachers implement in their classroom to improve their EFL learner's level in the writing process, in this study we are going to investigate how cooperative learning enhances learner's writing skill in the classroom and how it makes it proficient of this process.

1. Statement of the Problem

In an English learning classroom the teacher aims to develop the four skills of language. Writing is one of the most important skills which need to give great attention, because it is considered as the most difficult process. Nowadays, EFL students at the Department of English at Biskra University face a lot of writing problems that impede them from using and practicing English appropriately. To overcome these obstacles teachers required to employ different method and strategies, this will be through cooperative learning, which is the main strategy that helps learners to develop their writing and interaction in the classroom.

2. Significance of the Study

The significance of this study is to focus on the use of cooperative learning in the classroom as a step toward improving and encouraging English teaching and learning. It is a good opportunity to teachers to be aware that cooperative learning is an effective strategy for stimulating learners to write. Furthermore, it is the way to make students learn strategies, procedures and techniques to improve their achievement and interaction in EFL classroom.

3. Aims of the Study

- Investigate the value and the effectiveness of cooperative learning in classroom.

- Provide opportunities to motivate students for improve their writing skill.

- Make use of pair and small group work to maximize learners writing product and create good learning atmosphere.

- Learners Enhance to write and develop their writing skill.

4. Research Questions

The present study is based on the following questions

- What is cooperative learning in EFL classes?

- What is the impact of using cooperative learning as a strategy on students' writing achievements?

- Does cooperative learning enhance the level of the students to write in classroom?

5. Hypothesis

In accordance, we hypothesize inductively from the previous questions that:

If teachers of English use cooperative learning in the classroom, the learners' writing skill will be enhanced.

6. Research Methodology

In this research, we opt for the descriptive method. That is, it aims to describe cooperative group work and its significant role in improving learners' writing proficiency through using a questionnaire as a tool by which we collect data for the study.

7. Population and Sample

We have decided to choose third year LMD student at the Department of foreign language as a population (370 students) at the division of Mohamed Khider University of Biskra.

The sample of our research is from two groups, the equivalent of 50 students. They chosen randomly and respond to the questionnaire anonymously. In addition, we have selected 5 teachers from the population of 33 teachers to help us fulfill the current study with useful and reliable data.

We will design two questionnaires, one for teachers of English at university of Biskra; the second determined to the third-year LMD learners of English from the same department.

8. Structure of the Study

This dissertation consists of two parts: part one is theoretical. It is about the literature review. It includes two chapters. The first chapter deals with writing in foreign language .We start by giving the definition of writing and its relation to other skills. As well as its

characteristic of stages, the main approaches and highlights its main features including writing problems.

The second chapter is shed lights on the cooperative learning; beginning with an overview about this strategy, definition and presenting the goals of cooperative learning in developing the proficiency in writing process.

Part two is practical. This chapter deals with data analysis, it provide a detailed analysis of both teachers and learners' questionnaires.

9. Limitations of the Study

The present study has many limitations. The research is conducted on third year LMD students of English and written l expression teachers at the University of Biskra. The obtained results concern only this sample. They may not be generalized to all EFL students in different educational institutions. If future researches will enlarge the sample to represent EFL learners with different backgrounds and in different academic settings, the results may change. Another limitation that may affect the results of the study concerns the data gathering tool. The answers of the questionnaire can be subjects to hesitation, dishonest and skipping questions because the responds are not aware of the importance of the objectivity in the academic researches. Because of time limitation, we cannot consolidate the questionnaires findings with another data gathering tool like the direct observation.

Chapter One
The Writing Skill

Introduction

Teaching English as a foreign language demands students' exposure to the four language skills. The main aim of acquiring such language skills is to achieve highly developed abilities of receiving and producing the Foreign Language (FL), either in its oral or written form. As far as, writing is a basic skill in language to learn and develop. Moreover, to reach an acceptable level of writing activities, the learner has to make considerable efforts and practice in writing. This is the reason which makes us consider writing as the most sophisticated and complex compared to the other skills: listening, speaking, and reading. As indicated by Walters (1983:17) "writing is the last and perhaps the most difficult skill students learn if they ever do".

In this chapter, we will present an overview of writing, starting with a definition of writing as well as the relationship with other skills; between writing, speaking and reading. It gives much more concentration on the main approach for progressing it. Then the main steps in writing process and the importance of this skill. Finally, we will conclude the chapter with the problems that face learners in their writing.

1. Definition of Writing

Writing is one of the most fundamental language skills that people use to convey meaningful messages and to communicate their thoughts in different contexts. It has given an important contribution to Foreign Language Learning (FLL) therefore, many definitions of writing have been put forward by many scholars.

In general form, writing means the process of production which the meaning is conveyed through the use of graphic symbols that are called letter. Richards et al (1985) consider writing "a system of written symbols which represent the sounds, syllables or words of a language" (313). For Emig (1977:05), writing means "originating and creating a unique verbal construct that is graphically recorded". This means that writing represents the language through the use a set of graphs and symbols. While Byrne (1998:01) states that "Writing is clearly much more than the production of graphic symbols, just as speech is more than the production of sounds. The symbols have to be arranged, according to certain conventions, to form words, and words have to be arranged to form sentences". So, writing is not just a matter of symbols, these symbols have to be arranged according to conventions to form words and the combination of these words can form sentences. However, writing is seen to be the result of several steps in a systematic process, White & Arndt (1991:03) claim that "Writing is far from being a simple matter of transcribing language into written symbols: it is a thinking process in its own right. It demands conscious intellectual effort which usually has to be sustained over a considerable effort of time".

Moreover, Archiblad (2001) says that writing is complex process that wants an expertise and realization in various areas. In additions to this, it is a multidimensional skill, this latter is caused by the fundamental communication and working of the writer's awareness, experience and the cognitive requirements of the task. From all the above mentioned definitions, writing is a basic skill and it is a method to represent a certain language in a visual form.

2. Writing in Relation to Other Skills

2.1. Writing Vs Speaking

Writing and speaking are two skills being considered as productive. Harmer (1991:16) declared that "speaking and writing involve language production and therefore referred to as productive skill".

The act of writing and speaking are basically different in various ways. Those differences between two skills refer to bridge the gap between them. One significant difference between speaking and writing concerns lexical density; Harmer (2007:09) refers to lexical density as the properties of content words used. We find that a written text frequently has many more content words than function words. However,in speaking the portion of content words are significantly smaller. Halliday(1989) focused on the feature that tent to differentiate speech from writing. By lexical density he is referring "to the proportion of structure words (articles, pronouns, modal and auxiliary verbs) to content word (an open category by which is meant that addition can be made), which means that information is more densely complex into writing than into speaking" (cited in Harris, 1993:06).

Time and space, is another difference that Harmer (Ibid) claimed that, speaking is temporary. It means that the spoken word lasts for a short time, whereas writing is permanent; which indicates that written text can be stored and possibilities to refer back to at any time.

Moreover the participants, when the communication happens through speech, it is an immediate interaction between the speaker and listener, which they share the same context. However, the absence of the reader needs a great explicitness from the writer. In this aspect, Bachani (2003:01) claimed

> Unlike speech, writing is not always for the audience present and hence it demands clear and comprehensive message. While we speak we use variety of prosodic features such as pitch, loudness ,speed ,rhythm, pauses and so on that help us to get feedback from listeners but this does not happen in case of writing where the context is created through words alone and without the direct interaction between the writer and the reader.

According to this, we list some of the essential differences between writing and speaking is summarized by Reimes (1983), in the following table:

Speaking	Writing
• Universal; everyone acquires a native language. • Has dialect variation. • Speakers use their voice as (pitch, stress, and rhythm), and bodies as (gestures and facial expressions), to convey their ideas. • They use pauses and intonation. • They pronounce. • Speakers speak to listener who is right there, nodding or frowning, interrupting or questioning. • Simple sentence are used, connected by and's and but's. • Speaking is usually spontaneous and unplanned. • It is usually informal and repetitive.	• Not everyone learns to read and write. • Generally, demands standard forms of grammar, syntax and vocabulary. • Writers have to rely on the words on the page to express their ideas. • They use punctuation. • They spell. • For the writer, the reader's response is delayed or non existence. • More complex sentence is used with connecting words like: however, who and moreover. • Writing takes time and is planned. • More formal, it progress logically with fewer digressions.

Table1 : Differences between the speaking and writing skills (Reimes, 1983: 5)

When we consider this table and these differences, we realize that speech and writing are indeed two different ways of using language, and these differences contribute in teaching of in the way of teaching writing skill and focus more on their content.

2.2. Writing and Reading

Writing and reading are considered independent skills in a way that writing is a productive activity and reading is a passive one. However, they are complementary and have a close relationship; this means that reading and writing influence each other. Strengthening this point, Stosky (1983) says that "Better writers tend to be better readers…and better readers tend to produce more systematically mature writing than poorer readers" (cited in Bader, 2007: 9). Moreover, Reid (1994) indicates that the reading skill includes the ability to become more familiar with vocabulary, idiom and expression of language so-this helps the development of writing. Moreover to this, the learners who read

more they gain a great amount of knowledge about the writing skill, in addition to the use of language and culture. In brief, being able to write can be obtained from what a person read (Harris, 1993).

3. Approaches to Teach Writing

Teachers and students have become aware of the fact that writing takes particular forms in different contexts. As a result, numerous approaches and methods of teaching have been proposed. Although none of these approaches can be considered an ideal, they are successful in one period or another.

3.1. The Product Approach

The product approach to teaching writing is called differently the controlled to free approach. According to McDonough & Show (1993:43) this approach "is a traditional way to teach writing whose focuses are on accuracy and consolidation of grammar". Moreover, Nunan (1989:36) reported that "the teacher who adopts a product- approach makes sure that the end product is grammatically correct". So, we understand that product approach concentrate on the model of the final product of writing with an emphasis on the grammar, lexical and vocabulary etc.

Pincas (1982a), who describe the product approach and considered writing primarily in terms of linguistic knowledge, then he emphasizes the mechanical aspects of writing like grammar, syntax... with appropriate use. While Richards argues that "the product approach leads to practice in the structure and organization of different kinds of paragraphs and texts "(1992, as cited in Sadek, 2007:231).

This approach considers that learning writing ideally comprises four stages: familiarization, controlled writing, guided writing, and free writing. In familiarization stage, the students are supplied with a certain sample of text. In controlled and guided writing, the students are given an opportunity to practice a task with flexibility to be capable to write freely. In the free writing stage, the students focuses on the organization of ideas and to language that is used in order to write down what they want as a part of a genuine activity (Pincas,1982a). In addition to this, the students should give more attention to what is produced in the form of error such as spelling, punctuation and capitalization.

So, this approach gives more attention to the surface structure of language rather than its meaning.

3.2. The Process Approach

Process writing is an approach which emerged as a reaction to the product approach. It enables the learner to concentrate on the process by producing their written product rather than on the products themselves. As a consequence "writing is this seen as a process of creating, discovering and extending meaning rather than a process of putting down preconceived and well- formed meaning" Tsui (1996:97). In other words, this approach authorizes the learners to discover new ideas, develop information and enable them to be more creative and purposeful by formulating an effective piece of writing as well as they focus on the content rather than on the form.

Silva claim that "this approach calls for providing a positive, encouraging, and collaborative workshop environment within which students, with ample time and minimal interference, can work through their composing process"(1993, as cited in Sadek, 2007:232). In other words, to concentrate more on varied activities in the classroom to reinforce this skill, and to make students generate their ideas in a comprehensive manner, and organize it in a systematic way.

According to Tribble (1996) there are four stages in writing according to the Process Approach: prewriting, composing/drafting, revising, and editing. To reinforce the definition of the process-based approach, we will quote Murray (1992:16):

> The process-oriented approach refers to a teaching approach that focuses on the process a writer engages in when constructing meaning. This teaching approach concludes with editing as a final stage in text creation, rather than an initial one as in a product-oriented approach. The process-oriented approach may include identified stages of the writing process such as: prewriting, writing and re-writing. Once the rough draft has been created, it is polished into subsequent drafts with the assistance of peer and teacher conferencing. Final editing and publication can follow if the author chooses to publish their writing.

For this, these stages are recursive or nonlinear and they can interact with each others throughout the writing process.
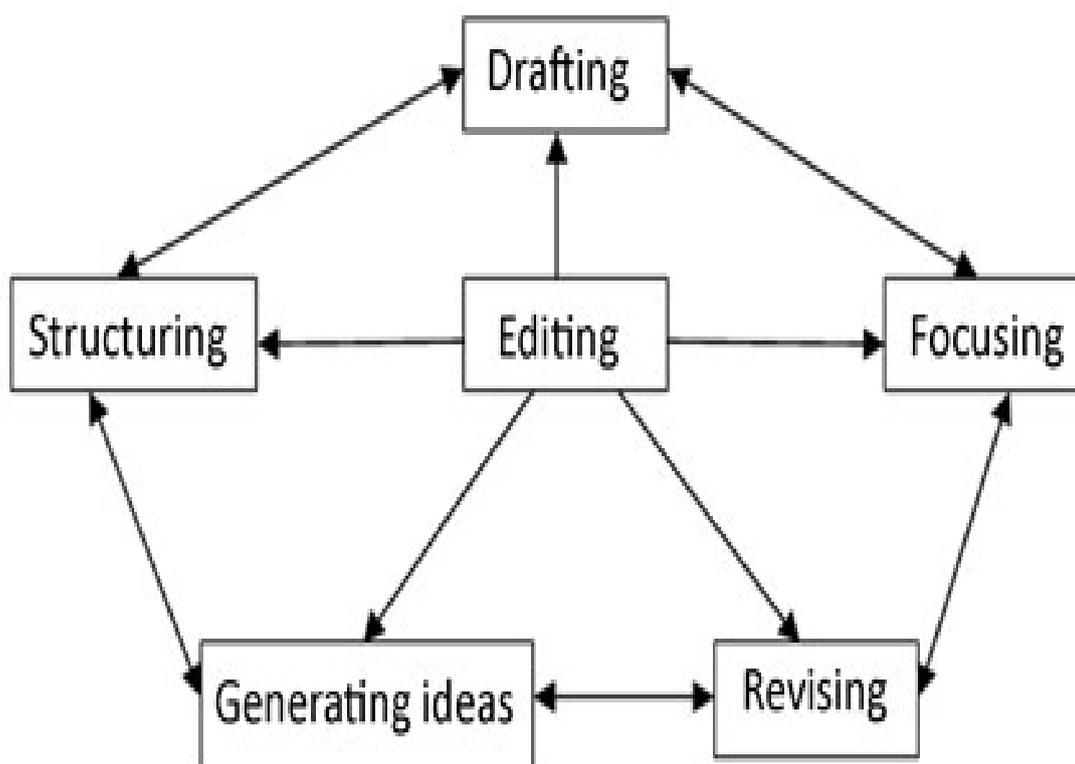
Figure 1: Model of writing process (White & Arndt, 1991:43)

In the following figure we consider the connection among the stage during the writing process. So, we understand that the writer can shift from one stage to another during the practice in order to get piece of writing.

3.3. The Genre Approach

Genre approach is one of the new approaches to English language teaching, which is regarded as being similar to the product approach. Flowerdew (1993) claim that

> Like product approaches, genre approaches regard writing as predominantly linguistic but, unlike product approaches, they emphasize that writing varies with the social context in which it is produced. So, we have a range of kinds of writing-such as sales letters, research articles, and reports - linked with different situations (cited in Badger &White, 2000:114).

Paltridge (2001) claims that the genre approach emphasizes the teaching of particular genre students need for later social communicative success. The focus would be the language and discourse features of particular texts and the context in which the text is

used. Thus, we understand that genre approach emphasis on teaching students the different genre and the context where writing occurs.

According to Cope & Kalantzis (1993) the genre approach consists of three mains phases. Moddeling the first phase, which the teachers has powerful directional to present students' with different examples of written genre, to realize the purpose of the text. Secondly, the construction of the text is between both teacher and students in order to establish previous knowledge about the text. Finally, independent construction of text depends only on students by utilizing prior knowledge in the text.

4. The Stages of Writing

Writing is considered as an important and complex process in the function of the language. That involves in significance, formal production and organization of information to write one ideas. This requires moving through different stages to make piece of successful writing. Harmer (2007: 04) states that "Writing is a process, that is, the stage the writer goes through in order to produce something in its final form". Supported to this idea Hedge (2000) sees that, this process of writing has four main categories which are: planning, revising, drafting and editing. While Hedge (2000) stated that "Writing is the result of employing strategies to manage the composing process. . . it involves a number of activities: setting goals, generating information, selecting appropriate language, making a draft, reading and reviewing it, then revising and editing" (302). So, these stages help students to complete their writing task successfully and foster the process of writing.

4.1. Planning

Planning is the threshold of the writing process, because the correct beginning is half of the work. It is the phase that the writer goes through before start on the actual writing task, which includes outlining, thinking, analysis, gathering information and organizing. Thus, planning is the activity that the writers go through before writing. Sundem (2007) describe the prewriting stage as "the first step of the writing process, authors will generate ideas, put their thoughts in order" (43).

When planning, you have to think about your subject, audience and purpose. Harmer (2004) points out, when the writer start planning, he/she must take into account three components. First, the purpose of their writing that has great impact on the language

use and the type of information. Second the audience who is influenced by the style of the language and finally the content structure of the piece of writing.

4.2. Drafting

After planning, the writer is going to write his first draft. It is an attempt that helps the students to shape and determine their ideas. According to El-Aswad (2002:200) "drafting, occurs when writers put their ideas into sentences and paragraphs. At this stage, writer's concentrate upon explaining and supporting their ideas fully .Here they begin to connect their ideas".

In this stage, the writer expands and transfers the whole of ideas into sentence and paragraph, without worrying about grammatical and mechanical errors. Hedge (2005) also highlights the importance of focusing on content "Good writers tend to concentrate on getting the content right first and leave details like correcting spelling, punctuation and grammar until later" (53).

Thus, the student should not forget themselves when writing draft and consider that never be turned a final version, they must respect time and concentration to write down their ideas on paper.

4.3. Revising

"Revision is that crucial point in the process when discovery and organization come together, when writers refine and recast what they have written and shape it into coherent written statement" Taylor (1981:07).

Revising is a very important part of the writing process. When you revise you focus on the different aspects of your writing, from how well the ideas are expressed and organized to sentence structure. First , look at the whole draft as one unit and ask yourself if you have achieved your purpose then satisfied your audience's needs, discussed the topic completely and check if the information written in a sequence or order that makes sense to you as writer. Finally, try to correct fragments and run –on sentence errors (Harris, 1993).

4.4. Editing

Editing is the last step, in which the writers assess the form of their work. It refers to focus on the context and a mechanics aspect from punctuation, capitalization, grammar and sentence. According to Harris (1993:59) "Editing involves the careful checking of the

text to ensure that there are no errors that will impede communication – errors of spelling, punctuation word choice and word order". Also Smith (2009:127) indicates that "the aim of editing is to make the text optimally readable". So, editing is an important stage, because it is considered as a part of the process, which makes the piece of writing clear and unambiguous as possible to the audience.

5. Importance of Writing

Writing is an important skill that has a prominent impact of language, also it is an essential skill that students need to master in their life. This is further explained by Carroll (1990) that the most important invention in human history is written. It provides a relatively permanent record of information, opinions, beliefs, feelings, arguments, explanations, theories. According to (Handle on Education, 2016) they list some important of writing skill.

- Writing makes a person powerful and influential in the world through the ideas he write.
- Writing is an active process that gives the students an opportunity to practice. It concentrates on personal experience, feeling, and observation.
- Writing improves self-confidence and participates effectively in life.
- Writing develops your intellectual ability to explain a complex position to readers and helps you refine your thinking when you give others feedback.
- Writing equips us with communication and thinking skills.
- Writing motivates student to improve reading comprehension, which is the better writer is the one who read more.
- Writing allows people to communicate with each other, which permit people to meet from the near and far distance   through their thoughts.

6. Writing Problems

Writing is one of the most important and the most difficult language skills that must be learned by EFL students. Teachers face a lot of problems to teach their students how to write a FL because they experience it only in the classroom. Zemach, & Islam (2006:11) go on the state "Writing is also one of the most difficult skills to master in both first

language and second language. Student can find it challenging to find ideas to include in their writing, and each culture has its own style for organizing academic writing".

Therefore, many researchers stress the importance of the practice and the exposure to this skill. Actually many students' face problems when they write; and this are related to many factors that hinder students from writing and, consequently, affect their writing achievements during the learning process. These factors can be summarized in the following points.

6.1. Grammar

Teaching grammar is an important part in the ability to use language successfully. For this, grammar has been considered as an essential element in the success of writing task. It is defined as "the rules that govern how language sentences are formed" (Thornbury, 2000:01). Wang (2010) adds "Grammar as a set of rules for choosing words and putting words together to make sense" (78). It means the rules that decide the correct order and usage of the elements of a language. Mastering of grammar is not an easy task for the students. That Widodo (2006:112) states "without a good knowledge of grammar, learners' language development will be severely constrained." This requires to write in a comprehensible and clear way, which means to know the rule and how to use it correctly.

The lack of grammatical competence become crucial problem in writing; and this make us notice that most of EFL students make various errors, which Al-buainain (2009:04) claims that "Sentence-level grammatical errors committed by the learners involve some syntactic features, namely verbs, relative clauses, articles, fragments, noun modifiers, and prepositions". For instance, students fail to select the right tense form to share their thoughts or do not conjugate it right. Also they possibly do not select the right articles a/the or miss order the structure of sentences. According to Hui-mien Tan (2007) confirm that " it will be very difficult to compose a clear, logical and fluent paragraph if a writer is unable to write reasonably acceptable simple sentences and does not possess the mastery of some complex sentence structures"(177). So, this error hinders the understanding of what they want to convey and fail to write in a correct way.

6.2. Spelling

Spelling is a basic skill in written expression which enables the writer to convey meanings and to communicate in a significant manner. Abdulmoneim (2013:06) states

"Spelling is a language skill whereby sounds (phonemes) are represented by letters (graphemes) which constitute the smallest building blocks of written language". But it is something which is difficult to master not only by learners but also in FLL. This difficulty causes a problem for students that make them confused about the relationship that exists between sound and speech. El-Aswad (2014:322) clarify that spelling "is very important in written language, and any mistakes in spelling can affect the written product and my lead to misunderstanding". So, spelling process plays an important factor in writing skill.

Many spelling errors as result of sound problem ,problem in sound analysis, poor memory which affect the writing product and get the meaning of writing language incomprehensible and they hinder the reader to understand what the writer mean.

6.3. Punctuation

Punctuation is a system of symbols that is usually used in writing language, as well as it is used in illustrating and clarifyies the tone of the voice, intonation and stress. Muslim (2014) claims "Punctuation marks give meaning to words as pauses and change in tone of speech do" (107). In addition to Hussein (2015:39) "punctuation helps the writer to present higher ideas clearly and accurately by showing where one thought ends and another begins. It also shows relationships between the ideas in the topic". Correct punctuation is an essential skill from language to language. The quality of what is writing is related to punctuation, and this latter, it is the problem of many learners. If punctuation marks are not used correctly this produce errors which can not only make negative impression but also difficult in understanding (Boardman & Frydenberg, 2004). Besides to this Grellet (1996:08) claimed that the role of using punctuation is "to make the text you write clear and easy to read. Defective punctuation can make a text very difficult to understand, and even leads to misunderstanding". Whereas, Hussein (op.cit) agrees that punctuation is an essential part of language. Without it writing has no meaning. Lacking one of the most types of punctuation like full stop or comma, this can make confusion in perceiving the meaning and interpret correctly. Thus, punctuation has an effective role in writing, and the lack of it leads to unstructured sentence, Incomprehensible meaning and misinterpretation of contents.

6.4. Vocabulary

Vocabulary has a great influence on the student's comprehension, which has been recognized as an important aspect of language components. According to Helena Fortes (2007:9)"vocabulary is one of the main keys for successful communication in language". Learning vocabulary has a critical part in language and it has Also been regarded an essential element in the context and writing process.

From (Norish, 1983; Alamirew, 2005)"A good writing or composition should consist of appropriate and varied range of vocabularies used along with proper grammar and varied range of sentence structures"(cited in Alfaki, 2015:45). Vocabulary plays an important role in writing, because it is the basic component of language. But it's classified as one of the main difficulties in writing skill. When the students lack this skill, they fail to produce in-depth word knowledge, also their piece of writing they contain unfamiliar words which reflect the reader comprehension and the purpose of writing to get the actions or information they want. They also impacted their ability to write English correctly.

In this respect, Corona, Spangenberger, & Venet (1998:26) agree: "At any level, written communication is more effective when a depth of vocabulary and command of language is evident".

6.5. Anxiety

Anxiety is one of the common obstacles that FL students face, which is considered as the most factor that impact the process of writing. Spielberger (1983) defined anxiety as "subjective feeling of tension, apprehension nervousness and worry". Also Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope (1986:128) state that "a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning process". So, anxiety is a combination of emotion, feeling and behavior, which students exhibit during practicing and learning the language in the classroom. This feeling has negative influences that affect the language learning in general and writing skill in particular. Many researchers identify the cause of writing problem.

- Difficulties in writing which take place when students are unable to express ideas in an appropriate and correct way.
- Poor skill development and the absence of organization and practice also the lack of understanding the process.

- Fear of negative evaluation and comment (Rezaei & Jafari 2014).

Similarly Kara (2013:109) claimed that "When writing as a skill is considered, learners thought that they lack necessary strategies like organizing ideas, gathering information, combining ideas. Moreover they thought that their English is not enough to express themselves clearly". Thus, the teacher should create positive atmosphere conducive to learning and designing interest activities in order to reduce anxiety.

6.6. Motivation

Motivation is one of the most important factors that enhance FL students in learning and developing the writing language. According to Heni (1991) "Motivation is a key component in learning. Motivation doesn't only help student to learn, it is essential for learning" (Cited in Alao et al, 2010:64). In addition to Salvin(2003:328) who considers motivation "One of the most important ingredients of effective instruction". Slavin (2003) indicates some source of motivation, which is a product of many factors such as students personality, setting, teacher behavior.

However, the lack of motivation affects many aspects of language writing. Strength to this point Payne (2012:01) states that "Students who lack motivation to write will not readily engage in academic writing activities. These students may exhibit high anxiety about writing, low self-efficacy for writing and a lack of self-regulation and self-determination when writing". Thus, motivation impede the success of the learning writing process, and students who lack motivation from writing a FL they fail in learning and practicing the language in a correct way in the learning process the role of the teacher is very important in this factor, which is to focus in encouraging and increasing students' motivation and make them aware that progress can be achieved only by learning and developing language in an effective way.

6.7. Self-Confidence

The term self-confidence can be explained by our feeling of trust and our belief in capacities in order to achieve the success. Stevens (2005) defined it as "a person's expectation of his or her ability to achieve a goal in a given situation and is a very influential factor in ensuring a person's potential is realized" (cited in Alias and Mohd Hafir, 2009:01).

During the writing process the student engagement is considered as one of the most critical components to students' self-confidence. In addition to, Neman (1995:05) argues that writing doesn't require merely knowledge, but also "the self-confidence to exercise this knowledge". So, self-confidence has a basic role in learning language, which the successful efforts by students in the classroom can be directly linked to the students 'self confidence. However, the Students with low self-confidence will be affected by stressful situations whereas; they fail to achieve their goals. Brown (2007) states that "no successful cognitive or affective activity can be carried out without some degree of self-confidence' in oneself – the belief in one's 'own capabilities to successfully perform an activity" (Cited in Alves 2008:6). Obviously, the lack of self confidence affects negatively both the student and the learning process.

7. Cooperative Writing

Writing in FL is a complex activity in different area, to facilitating this activity requires implementing different strategies. Adopting cooperative learning inside writing classes is one of the beneficial strategy which provide the opportunity for students to work together, exchange information and develop and understand their ideas. Many researchers suggested the importance of implementing cooperative learning strategies in writing classes Bashyal (2009:16) stated the benefit of the cooperative strategy "… helps in producing a good product because the writers in a small number of groups can discuss at each other and reach to the conclusion after synthesizing the ideas of all". Moreover,De Silva regard that cooperative learning is process of various writers delivering one document. It is not only the requesting of thoughts about the document however the real commitment of the different segments which are then grouped together to frame the last document.

Acoording to Halkett, G. (2010:01) claim that cooperative writing activities have one of three aims

- Focus on 'messages' and targeted communication functions. Objectives embodied in process of cooperative writing and the communication tasks (e.g., brainstorming, speedwriting, story sequences, and jigsaws.
- Provides structure for student interaction
- Encourages 'positive interdependence'

Conclusion

We have dealt, in this chapter, with the concept of writing by exploring the main relationship with reading and speaking and it's the main stages and the major approaches. And then, we identified its importance, difficulties and complexities. To conclude this chapter, we can say that writing is an important linguistic skill that must be developed by EFL students through giving them the best possible training. Those learners should be as simple and clear as possible in their writing, so as to avoid any difficulty.

For that reason, the teaching of this skill should be given further importance for its finite and unavoidable importance in learning English. In the next chapter, we will discuss a new technique in teaching writing skills and improving student's abilities in written production through cooperative learning

Chapter Two
Cooperative Learning

Introduction

Cooperative learning plays a paramount role in education, as it is one of the most significant area of teaching and learning FL. It refers to instructional methods that teachers use to organize students into small groups, in which students work together to help one another to learn academic content through exchanging thoughts and opinions, interact with each other and to accomplish common learning goals.

In this chapter, we attempt to provide an overview about cooperative learning, elements, and its implementation in teaching and learning classroom. Then, as far as , we will review the theoretical background of cooperative learning, present the common cooperative learning strategies, and then shed light on some of its benefits, which as suggested by researchers. We conclude this chapter with the notion of interaction and its role in creating a dynamic learning.

1. Definition of Cooperative Learning

The concept of cooperative learning is referred to as a method of teaching and learning language, which is involving in instructional interaction by peer mediation. This method has been defined by different scholars. Johnson & Johnson (1991:69) state that cooperative learning is "the instructional use of small groups so that students work together to maximize their own and one another's learning". Slavin (2011:344) adds that cooperative learning is "instructional methods in which teachers organize students into smaller groups which then work together to help one another learn academic content". These demonstrate that cooperative learning is one of instructional methods and the key factors is putting students in group to work together and to help each other. Olsen & Kagan (1992) also indicate that cooperative learning is one of the instructional strategies, which organized group of learning activity, that affected by the transmission of information between the students who work together, which have the same objective. This makes progress of both group and individual that illustrate the role of cooperative learning in motivating participation.

However, cooperative learning is not a limited method by group working. It is more than that. It involves conscious thought, wary to variation elements and parts of group work, which can be beneficial to all the group members and shared goals. Artz & Newman (1990:445) claimed that "cooperative learning is working together as a term to solve a problem, complete a task or accomplish a common goal". In other words, the main feature of this method is improving learning in groups by making student's cooperation and interdependence, and this latter through the employment of cognitive strategies to reach the common goals and objects.

Considering all the previous definitions, cooperative learning is an effective way of teaching. It is learner-centered approach in which learners work together in groups to pursue learning goals.

Johnson, Johnson & Smith (1991) posit five basic elements of cooperation:
Positive interdependence: group members depend and rely on one another to achieve the goal. One cannot succeed unless everyone succeeds.

Individual accountability: the performance of each individual is assessed and the results are given back to the group and the individual in order to ascertain who needs more assistance, support, and encouragement in learning.

Face-to-face promotive interaction: group members promote each other's productivity by helping, sharing, and encouraging efforts to produce. They explain, discuss, and teach what they know to teammates to achieve group's goal.

The appropriate use of interpersonal and small-group skills: For a successful cooperation, Students are encouraged to develop social skills such as: trust-building, leadership, decision-making, communication, and with conflict management skills.

Group processing: Groups need specific time to discuss how well they are achieving their goals and maintaining effective working relationships among members, make decisions about what actions to continue or change and describe what member actions are helpful or unhelpful.

2. The Basic Theory of Cooperative Learning

Cooperative learning is formed from a range of theories. Each one of them tries to give positive effects of using cooperative learning to student's achievement. Slavin (1996) considers these theoretical perspectives as "...relevant dimensions that contribute to our understanding of the effects of cooperative learning" (cited in Hoon, 2004: 42-43). These theories include social interdependence theory, Cognitive perspective theory and Behavioral learning theory, which offer insight about how to guide a research on cooperative learning.

2.1. Social Perspective Theory (also called social interdependence theory)

The perspectives of this theory concern in the impact of cooperative learning on the achievement of the students are dependent on the group's cohesion and interaction. Johnson & Johnson (2009) defined this social perspective as follows "Exist when the outcomes of individuals are affected by their own and other action" (360). Thus, this perception involves an interaction among individuals. Moreover, Deutsch (1949) highlighted the social interdependence which determines how individuals interact with each other and share common goals. He noted that the social perspective can be negative or positive.

The positive cooperation happens when students perceive that the achievement of their goals lies on the link of the group and how they can help each other, and these results in promotive interaction. However, in the case of negative interaction, individuals do not work cooperatively and discourage each other because they are competent, also this is a result in optional interaction. No interdependence exists, when learners work individually without interaction among them.

Social perspective is demonstrated by Jolliffe (2010) in the following characteristics:

- Other people's actions make up the minds of people about any instructional issues, but also can be a critical element for them goals and achievements.
- The mutual benefits of achieving goals can be explained in terms of investment emotional, which establishes strong bonds of affection that may bring advantages to other side and help them realize their common goals.
- There is openness to being influenced by and to influencing others, so that joint actions are more effective.

2.2. Cognitive Perspective Theory

The cognitive theorists investigate the process of learning and its relation with the human mind. They view that cognitive perspective is characterized by the development of individuals knowledge processing and mutual interaction among students. Cohen et al (2004:168) states that "the cognitive theory view learning as a process of constructing knowledge through cognitive process like reflective, abstraction, recognition and so on". While Tran (2013:106) refers to cognitive perspective as "Cognitive theory explores how the process of thinking and learning occurs by considering the inside of the human mind". This means that, cognitive perspective related with mutual interaction leads to better learning and achievement. The development of cognitive perspective based on the work of Piaget and Vygotsky. The former is personal constructive and the latter is social constructive.

2.2.1.Vygotskyain Perspective

The main concept of the Vygotskys' theory is the development of the social nature of learning through interaction which plays a major role in cognitive growth. According to Vygotsky (1987) "every function in the child's cultural development appears twice. First

on the social level, and later on the individual level…" (51). Vygotsky works based on the zone approximant is defined as "… the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving, and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or collaboration with more capable peers" (1978:86). So, Vygotsky highlights the importance of identifying the gap between the learners who work without an aid and who can achieve with the help in order to become more competent.

"What a child can do today in co-operating, tomorrow he will be able to do on his own" (Vygotsky, 1978:86). To this end, he emphasized the role of social, cultural interaction in constructing knowledge .which is considered as a crucial element in cognitive development and intellectual growth. These developments of researchers show that knowledge is constructed effectively through the reciprocal interaction among learners.

2.2.2. Piagetian Perspective

Piaget perception (1926) supports the cognitive development, that knowledge is constructed effectively through the reciprocal interaction among students. In contrast to Vygotskain perception, learning cooperatively with more capable peers leads to cognitive development, Piagets' theory suggested that cognitive development leads to learning. Besides of this, a basic component of Piagets' development theory of learning and thinking was that both involve the participation of the students. As well as, Piaget (1926) explains, discovery learning as an active process of inquiry-based instruction that helps the students build on prior knowledge through experience and to search for new information and relationships based on their interests. If the new knowledge is consistent with the existing knowledge, then the student must create equilibrium between the two knowledge (Piaget, 1971; Tran, 2013).

2.3. Behavioral Learning Theory

The behavioral learning is one of the most widely theory that explains the impact of group rewards. This perspective focuses on reinforcing group and rewards on learning. Slavin (1995) named this motivational theory and sow that "rewarding groups based on group performance (or the sum of individual performances) creates an interpersonal reward structure in which group members will give or withhold social reinforces (e.g., praise,

encouragement) in response to group mates' task-related efforts" (Cited in wiliams & Burden, 1997:197). According to this perspective assume that students are likely to work together and achieve better when they are motivated to meet their goals, therefore they consider motivation as the most important aspect in the learning process.

In cooperative learning, the group's members work together toward their common goals, and they help and encourage each other to succeed individually and with groups. So, this perspective is based, on the use of group goals and group rewards which enhance the outcome of cooperative learning.

3. Goals of Cooperative Learning

Cooperative learning is considered as a range of technique and concepts that enhance the communicative interaction among students. It is an effective way to increase academic achievement in the classroom and get common goals, according to Richards & Rodgers (2001:193) the goals of cooperative learning language can be summarized as follows:

- Providing students with opportunities of natural language acquisition via interaction with pairs and group activities.
- Providing teachers with a methodology that helps them accomplishing the previous goal and that suits different curriculum settings.
- Providing learners with opportunities to develop their communication strategies, and maximize their learning process.
- Creating a comfortable atmosphere in the classroom that motivates students and reduces their stress and anxiety.
- Enabling the teacher to make his/her students focus on a specific subject such as: structure of language, communicative function.

4. Types of Cooperative Learning

Most of researchers who dealt with cooperative learning have focused on the efficacy of students who are working in a small group together which has an influence on learning goals and tasks. According to Johnson, Johnson & Holubec (1998) there are three

types of cooperative learning in which the role of the teacher can be used. They are: formal cooperative learning, informal cooperative learning and cooperative base groups.

4.1. Formal Cooperative Learning

Formal cooperative learning involves an organized interaction among the members of the groups to work together, and for students to interact with each other. Johnson, Johnson, & Holubec (1998) state that "Formal cooperative learning consists of students working together, for one class period to several weeks, to achieve mutual learning goals and complete jointly specific tasks and assignments" (Cited in Johnson & Johnson, 1999:69). Thus, this type of groups learning is ideally studies for students to work together for extended periods of time to achieve specific purposes. Furthermore the teacher in formal CL has five elements.

1- Specify the objectives of the lesson.
2- Make decisions about how to structure the learning groups about the number of students and their role in groups, and how arranging the materials and the room.
3- Clarify and explain the instructional task and positive interdependence for the students.
4- Monitor students learning, and their role to provide assistance in the interpersonal group and skills.
5- Evaluate the student work and helping students' process how well their groups function (Johnson &Johnson, 2015).

4.2. Informal Cooperative Learning

In contrast to the formal cooperative learning, Johnson & Johnson (1999) suggested informal cooperative learning which consists of having students working together in groups to achieve shared goals. These groups may last for a few minutes to a whole class period. When implementing informal cooperative learning the focus is on directing the attention of students in the martial to be learned on the lecture, demonstration, or film. To set an atmosphere favorable to learning, and to ensure that students cognitively are aware of the material to be learned. Moreover, teachers within this instructional type of cooperative learning will concentrate on addressing the students on the material intellectually being taught as well as increase the individual accountability of participating in the discussions (ibid).

4.3. Cooperative Base Groups

Johnson, Johnson, & Holubec, (2013) describe the term cooperative base groups as "long-term, heterogeneous cooperative learning groups with stable membership in which students provide one another with support, encouragement, and assistance to make academic progress (attend class, complete all assignments, learn)" (Cited in Johnson & Johnson, 2015:15).The main objective of this type of grouping is established to provide help, encouragement and support among the students of the same group to achieve academic progress. The longer the group stables the one who meets daily, and the more committed students become successful with each other to accomplish their assignment. Base groups seek to improve student performance of the learning process and how to work cooperatively, when they face problems with learning or any other aspects (Johnson & Johnson, 1989).

5. Cooperative Learning Strategies in the Classroom

There are several strategies of cooperative learning that is applied in the classroom, but all of them, involve enhancing students of different level working together and helping each other to learn academic material. Johnson et al (1991:03) claimed that "Cooperative learning is actually a generic term that refers to numerous methods for organizing and conducting classroom instruction. Almost any teacher can find a way to use cooperative learning that is congruent with his or her philosophies and practices".

The following are some cooperative strategies that have used effectively by the teacher in the language classroom:

5.1. Jigsaw

Jigsaw I is a cooperative learning technique that has been designed by Arson (1978). This aims to ensure that students with a group are responsible for their task. Arend (2004) clarifies that students are divided into small teams of four or six members toward academic material; each member of the group is given a different part of materials. After that, students study this section and meet with different members in expert groups who have the same material to discuss and teach each other what they have learned and help to master the material.

Jigsaw II was developed by Salvin (1994). It is based on Alonso's technique with a modification. It uses similar teams with work on common material first and they are given separate topics to become expert. These students work on their topic in the expert groups in order to teach the members group (Salvin, 1995).

5.2. Learning Together

The cooperative learning model, "learning together" was developed by Johnson &Johnson (1994). It was described as strategies in which

> Students worked as group to complete a single group product, shared ideas and helped each other with answers to question, made sure all members were involved and understood group answers, and asked for help from each other before asking the teacher, and the teacher praised and rewarded the group on the basis of the group performance (Knight, and Bohlmeyer, 1990: 2).

The main aspect of his model is to make students work together interdependently to achieve the group goals and show that they have individually mastered the material. Furthermore, Johnson & Johnson (1987) showed that this teaching method included five basic elements: positive interdependence, face-to-face interaction, individual (and group) accountability, interpersonal and small-group skills, and group processing. These elements are forming an effective cooperative task in the group which is characterized by motivation and interaction. That gives useful outcome of group members.

5.3. Student teams Achievement Division (STAD)

Student teams Achievement Division is one of the cooperative learning methods that was created by Robert Slavin. It involves completion of students among groups for achieving learning objective. In this method, Slavin (1994) states that, students are grouped into heterogeneous learning teams; with students level of performance, gender and ethnicity, composed of four members. The teacher first presents a lesson, and then the students work together with their teams to make sure that all team members have mastered the lessons. At the end, all students take quizzes individually without helping each other to demonstrate how they have learned by given an important score. This improvement scores are compared to their own past average and based on how they will do relatively to their previous quizzes. The individual quizzes scores are summed to form a team score, and teams are rewarded for their performance (Arends, 2004).

In brief, the main idea of this STAD method is to motivate students to help each others in improving and accelerating performance and master the skill taught by the teachers to enhance the learning achievement successfully.

5.4. Think Pair Share

Think pair share is an effective typical technique that was proposed by Lyman (1981), which highlighted the level of structure and cognitive development. This learning strategy allows students to discuss and examine their ideas before sharing with a whole group. It consists of three main steps. In the first steps the students think for themselves with an amount of time on the question posed by the teacher. During the second step, the students work in pair to discuss their question with each other. Finally, in the third step the learner share their responses with other patterns or with the whole class (Kagen, 1994).

5.5. Round Table

Round table is another cooperative strategy, where the students take a turn to work in group in order to generate and share information together. Kagan (1994) states that in round table the teacher asks a question which has multiple answers, each student writes a response or a portion of a response. After writing their response, they give the paper to the next person. Round table can be done with one piece of paper per group or with one piece of paper per group member (Cited in Al-Yaseen, 2014: 94). Kang's round table is a structure which helps the students to improve their writing by using brainstorming, reviewing and predicting or practicing. Also it is a reflective way of solving writing problems.

6. Role and Social Interaction in Cooperative Learning

6.1. Teacher-learner Interaction

In cooperative learning approach, a classroom teacher plays a significant role in increasing interaction among students in their learning process. Harel (1992) defines the teacher's role in the classroom as follows:

> During this time the teacher interacts, teaches, refocus, questions, clarifies, supports, expands, celebrates, and emphasizes. Depending on what problems evolve, the following supporting 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 (169).

Thus, the teachers are in the state of dynamic interaction in the classroom. The teacher's awareness towards the students' cultural norms flattens the way for him to turn the class into an interactive setting. Brown (2001:167) states that

> The teacher must create a climate in which spontaneity can thrive, in which unrehearsed language can be performed, and in which the freedom of expression given over to students makes it impossible to predict everything that they will say and do.

In other words, the teacher must create an environment of equal chances for anyone to participate and use the language; mistakes are allowed but immediately corrected. Therefore, the teacher must take the role of a facilitator rather than an authoritarian or a controller. This will create the classroom interacted and raise the students' self-confidence. In this matter, Rivers (1987:9) claims that "Real interaction in a classroom requires the teacher to step out of the limelight, to cede a full role to the student in developing and carrying through activities, to accept all kinds of opinions, and be tolerant of errors the student makes while attempting to communicate".

6.1.1. Raising Student's Motivation

Dornyei (2001:116) notes "teacher skills in *motivating* learners should be seen as central to teaching effectivenessd". Motivation is probably the most important factor that teachers focus on in order to improve learning through interaction. It is the essential element for quality of education. Students motivation can occur when they consist basic components, which contain student, teacher, content, method or process, and environment. The first goal of the teacher is encouraging students to engage in the task and this enhances their motivation to learn. If students are not motivated enough they will hardly achieve the learning goals. Teachers must design interesting activities that help the classroom interaction to take place. The interactive activities may energize the class and create a more positive attitude towards learning (Williams & Williams, 2011).

6.1.2. Building Student's self-Confidence

Despite the benefits attributed to cooperative learning; the teacher plays an important role as a helper and facilitator which promote his students' self-confidence by interacting with them. When the teacher creates activities and students take charge of their

learning, this can gain their self-confidence and self-esteem and get effective interaction that is involved in the learning process and providing positive feedback and achieving a progress. If students have a positive self-confidence then they would be able to bear classroom stress and anxiety will be more attentive in class, made a good relationship with their colleagues, and engage in classroom activity with a positive attitude (ibid).

6.1.3. Breaking the Ice between the Teacher and the Student

Breaking the ice is an expression in a learning environment that construct on connections , and making people who do not know each other feel more comfortable and relaxed. To break the ice in the students interaction, the teacher should bridge the distance between him and his students in the same row, and he or she emphasizes on the collaboration between them. This can contribute to the creation of a positive learning environment and a friendly atmosphere as well as help students to start responds to the teacher content and exchange ideas. In other words, this will break the barriers, enable students to become familiar with one another and lower their anxiety and shyness levels in the classroom (McGrath et al, 2014).

6.2. Learner-learner Interaction

When implementing cooperative learning in the classroom, the interaction does not comprise only the teacher- learner interaction but also the learner-learner interaction. Through designing group work, students play an important role in cooperation among them. As (Barnes, 1969; Mercer, 1996) states:

> When students interact in cooperative groups, they learn to give and receive information, develop new understandings and perspectives, and communicate in a socially acceptable manner. It is through interacting in a socially acceptable manner. It is through interacting with each other in reciprocal dialogues that students learn to use language dialogues that students learn to use language   differently to explain new experiences and new realities and, in so doing construct new ways of thinking and feeling (cited in Gillies, 2004:258).

Slavin(1995:2) supports that "They are expected to help each other, to discuss and argue with each other to assess each other's current knowledge and fill in gaps in each other understands". So, when teachers provide a relaxing and appropriate atmosphere, thus this makes the opportunity for learner to interact and share their ideas and knowledge. Through learner - learner interaction, students participate actively in the group by sharing his or her different ideas and opinions also tend to dominate the tasks.

Moreover, this interaction tends to develop student's social skills through clarifying the gap of how to cooperate in an interaction task. Larsen-Freeman (2000:164) states that "in cooperative learning, teachers teach students collaborative skills so that they can work together more effectively". As well to improve student's interpersonal awareness which refers to the ability to show a true understanding of yourself, others and having a deep knowledge of your own thoughts and feelings. Interpersonal awareness is a cornerstone for social or emotional learning, and it is a skill that helps us get along with others (cited in Schmitz, 2012). According to Kagan (1994; in Woolfolk, 2004:495) the teacher within a group work activity, should give the learners a specific role to play in order to interact with each other and accomplishing their overall group's goal. In the following table, Kagan listed some roles that learners can perform within cooperative learning activity.

Table2 : Possible Roles for Learners within Group Work (Kagan, 1994; cited in Woolfolk, 2004:496)

Role	Description
Encourager	Encourages reluctant or shy students to participate.
Praiser/cheerleader	Shows appreciation of other's contribution and recognizes accomplishment.
Gate keeper	Equalizes participation and makes sure how one dominates.
Coach	Helps with the academic content, explains concepts.
Question commander	Make sure all students' questions are asked and answered.
Taskmaster	Keeps the group on task.
Recorder	Writes down decisions and pla
Reflector	Keeps group aware of progress (or lack of progress).
Quiet captain	Monitors noise level.
Materials monitor	Picks up and returns materials.

7. Benefits of Cooperative Learning

Co-operative learning is well recognized as a pedagogical practice that promotes learning, higher level thinking, prosocial behavior, and a greater understanding of children with diverse learning, social and adjustment needs (Cohen 1994 cited in Gilles & Ashma,2003:13). Thus, cooperative learning is considered as an effective method to enhance teaching and learning process that helps learners to perceive, retrain ideas and improve their skills. The researchers identified numerous benefits of implementing cooperative learning teaching that include positive interdependence, high achievement and better motivation etc. These benefits summarized by kagan & kagan (2009) into following points:

1. It promotes groups' and individuals' outcome, productivity and achievement because when one member helps his group mates, he helps himself and the whole group.
2. It improves students academic achievement.
3. It increases intrinsic motivation.
4. It heightens self-esteem and reduces anxiety.
5. It establishes a relaxed learning atmosphere.
6. It creates positive relationships among individuals.
7. It provides more opportunities for negotiating meaning and increased comprehensible input.
8. It provides opportunities for collaborative thinking, immediate feedback and regulation of thoughts. Students can transmit their ideas and assess others' thought.

Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, we highlighted three main notions: cooperative learning, group work activities and interaction. These notions are very important for language development, especially when teachers exploit them in written expression classes to enhance learners' writing performance. We presented cooperative learning in the form of strategies that can develop the language skills and enable the teachers to select the appropriate strategy that suits his or her objectives. We mentioned the advantages that can be gained from their implementation in EFL classes. Finally we tried to identify the advantages of teacher-learners and learner-learners interaction in interactive classes.

Chapter Three
Field Work

Introduction

The current study is an attempt to investigate the significance of using cooperative learning strategies in teaching the writing skill in the division of English Language at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra. The theoretical part (chapter I and chapter II), has been devoted to expose some researchers' perspectives on writing skill and strategies of cooperative learning. While this chapter is devoted to the field work of the study. It presents the analysis and the discussion of the data obtained from the research tools. To conduct and enrich our research with valuable data, we adopt the descriptive method because of the nature and the objectives of the topic.

We designed and distributed two questionnaires, one was for third year students and the other was for teachers especially those who are teaching Written Expression course. The obtained results analyzed and discussed later in relation to the hypothesis.

1. Student's Questionnaire

1.1. Aims and Administration of Student's Questionnaire

This questionnaire was handed randomly to 5O students of third year LMD students of English at Biskra University. At the beginning participants were given introductory instructions to clarify the way to answer the questions along with the objective of our study. The questions were simple, direct and precise in order to help the students understand them, and thus, provide appropriate answers. The answers took half an hour and all the copies were returned in the same day.

The idea of distributing the questionnaire for students is to identify the actual level of students' in writing skills and their problems in class and their perception about the strategies used by teachers to overcome these difficulties. It also attempt to establish the students' attitude towards the use of learning cooperation in written expression classes and teaching writing skills , and know the value of classroom interaction and role of teacher and learners .

1.2. Description and Analysis of the Students Questionnaire

1.2.1. Description

This questionnaire is composed of three sections which consist of fifteen open-ended and multiple choice questions. In the first section we started the questionnaire by asking general information question about student's gender, the years studying English. In the first and the second sections, the questions are about the perception of writing skill and their attitudes towards the use of cooperative learning to overcome EFL writing difficulties.

1.2.2. Analysis

Section One: Students' Profile

Q1. Please, specify your gender

Gender	Number	Percentage %
Male	11	22 %
Female	39	78 %

Table3 :The Student's Gender
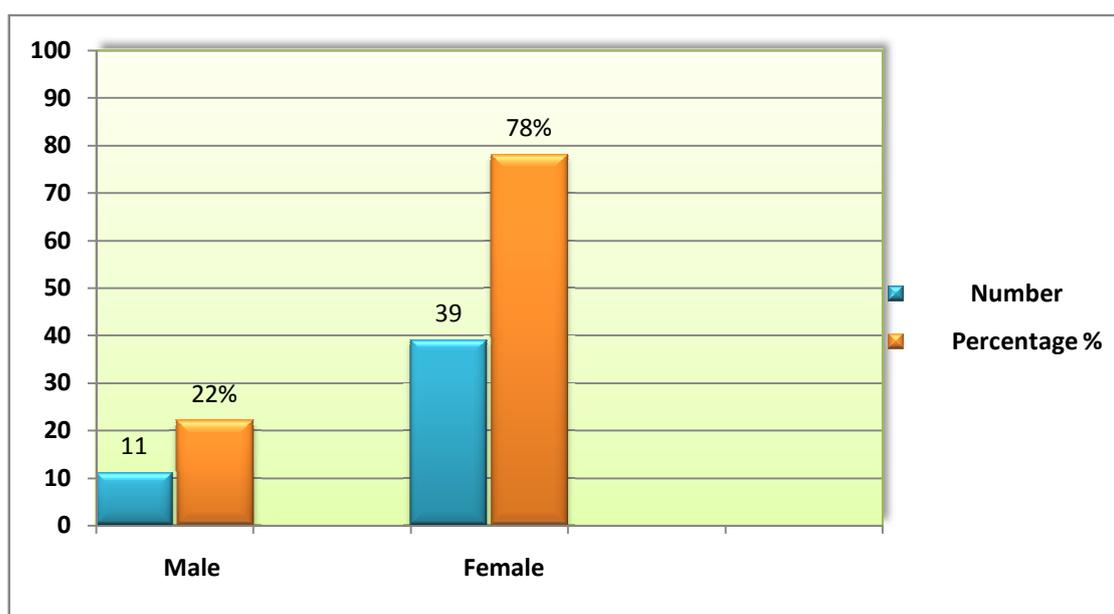
Graph1: Student's Gender

From table (3) we notice that the majority of students (78 %) are females, whereas the males represent (22 %) of the whole population. By these ideas, that females are more interested in FL area than males.

Q2. How long have you been learning English at university?

Period	Number	Percentage %
3 years	43	86 %
More than 3 years	7	14 %

Table4 : Period of Studying English at University
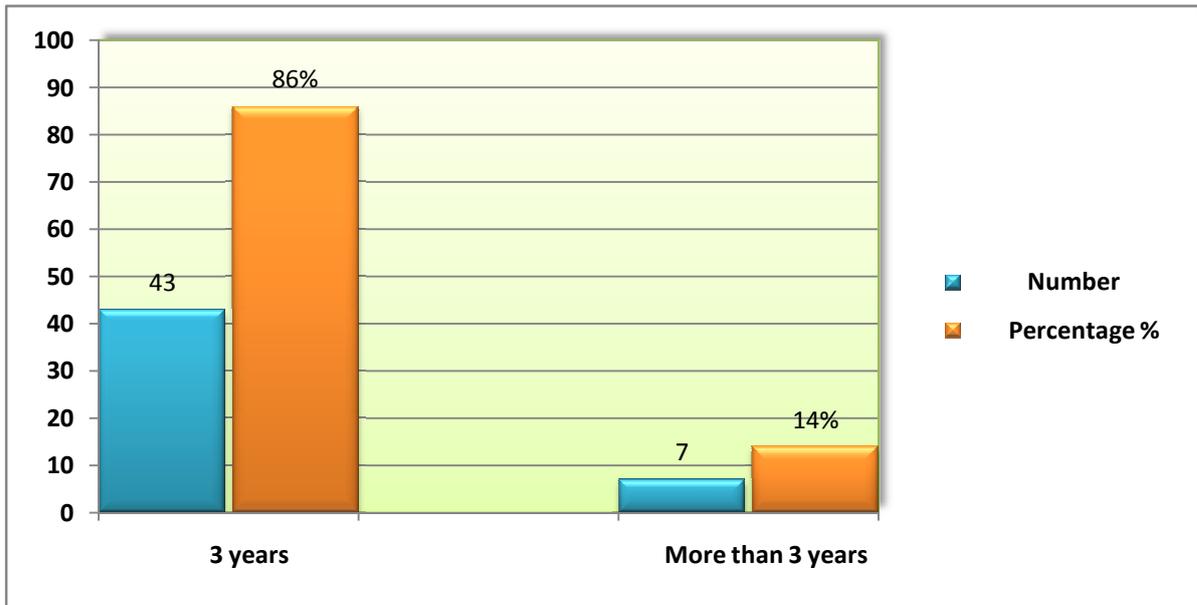
Graph2 : Period of Studying English at University

The table and graph indicate that (86 %) of the students have been studying English at university for 3 years and only (14 %) of them have been studying more than 3 years. This means that students repeat a year respectively or they have other diplomat and other career besides learning English.

Q3. How do you evaluate your level in English?

Answer	Number	Percentage %
Excellent	4	8 %
Average	44	88 %
Poor	2	4 %

Table5 : Students' Evaluation of their Level in English
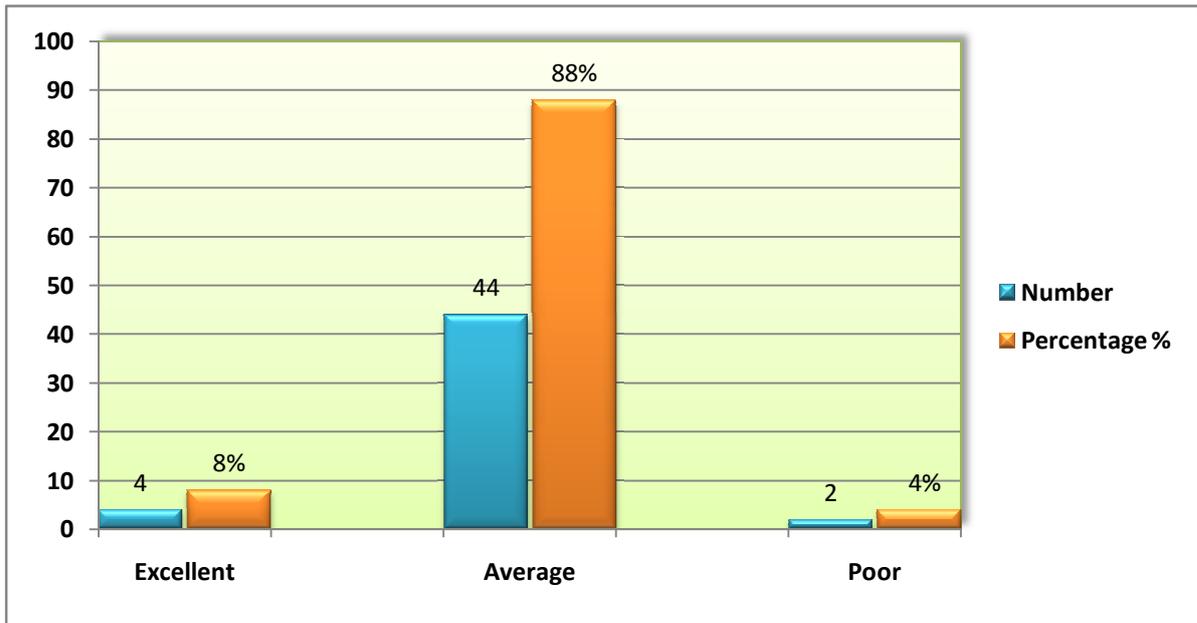
Graph3 : Students' Evaluation of their Level in English

Concerning the number of third-year students, table (5) reveals that (88%) of the sample evaluate their level in English as being average, and this percentage is considered as logical. Which means that most of them do not have the sufficient experience to be excellent in English. However, only (8 %) of students claimed that their level in English is excellent, while (4%) have a poor level in English.

Section Tow: Students' Attitude towards the Writing Skill

Q4. Does writing interest to you?

Options	Number	Percentage %
Yes	41	82 %
No	9	18 %

Table6: Students' interest in writing skill
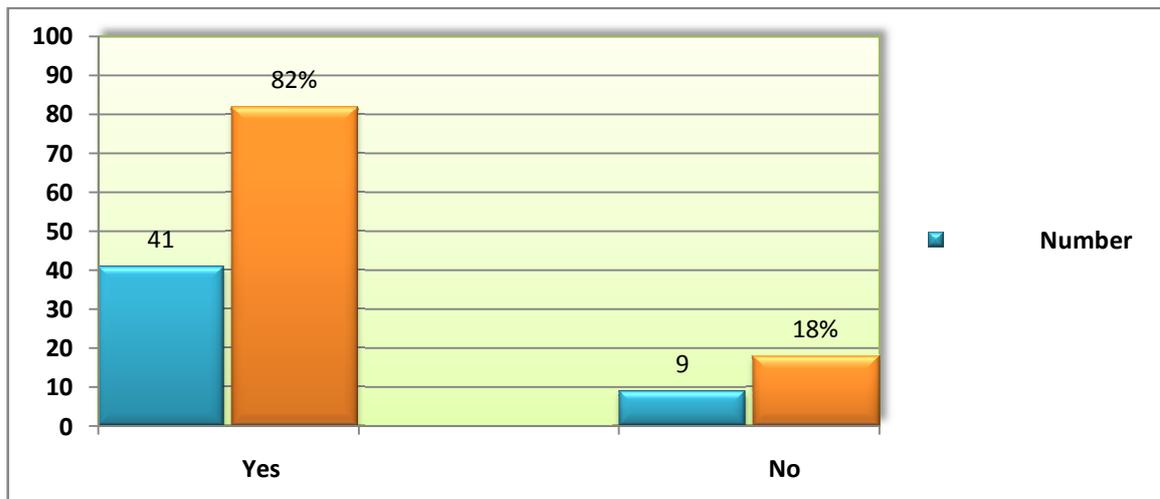
Graph4 : Students' interest in writing skill

The aim of this question is to recognize if writing was interesting for students or no. The results from the table and histogram above show that (82 %) of the students find that the module of writing interesting. Whereas, (18%) of students state that it is not interesting. This means that, the majorities of students are aware of the importance of writing and have a desire to write.

Q5. How do you find writing in English?

Option	Number	Percentage %
Very Easy	1	2 %
Easy	22	44 %
Difficult	25	50 %
Very difficult	2	4 %

Table7 : The Students Attitudes Towards Writing English
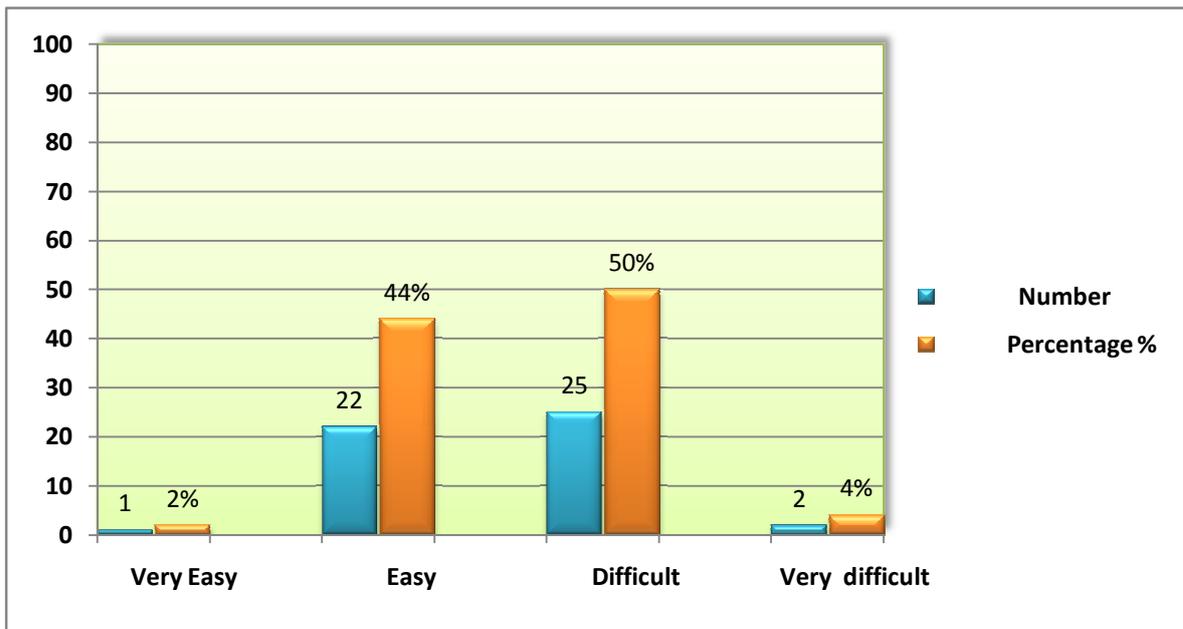
Graph5 : The Students Attitudes Towards Writing English

This question was targeted towards diagnosing the students' attitude from writing in English. The results obtained from table (7) show that (44%) of the students consider that writing is an easy task. (50%) of the subjects find that writing is difficult. Only (2 %) of them believe that writing is very easy and (4%) who find it very difficult. This result implies that most of the sample has difficulties in writing effectively in the English language; therefore, they need to be scaffolded through the use of appropriate strategies.

Q6. To what extent written expression courses help you improve your writing skill?

Options	Number	Percentage %
Very much	48	96 %
Some how	42	84 %
Not very much	8	16%
Not at all	2	4 %

Table8 : The Effectiveness of Written Expression Course
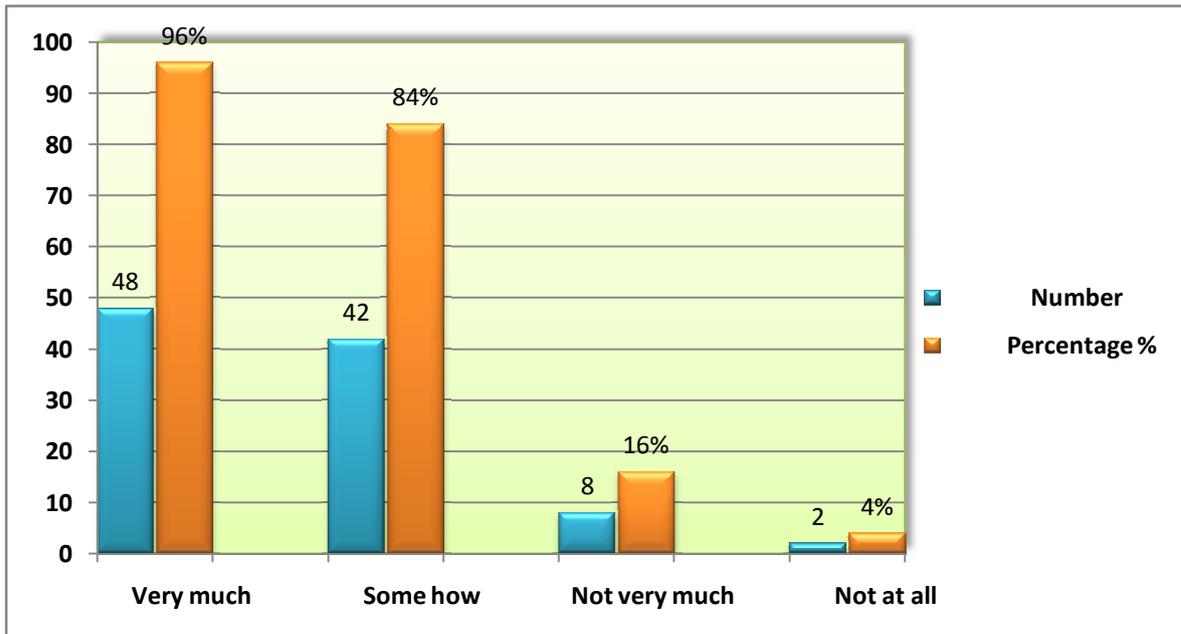
Graph6 : The Effectiveness of Written Expression Course

In this question, about (48%) of students admitted that written expression course helps them very much to improve their level in writing proficiency, while 42% think that somehow it develops their writing skill. Only (8%) of them answered that the written expression course is not very much helpful, and (2%) of the subjects said that it is not helping them at all.

Q7. Do you face difficulties when you write in classroom?

Options	Number	Percentage %
Yes	38	76 %
No	12	24 %

Table9 : Students' Difficulties in Written Expression class
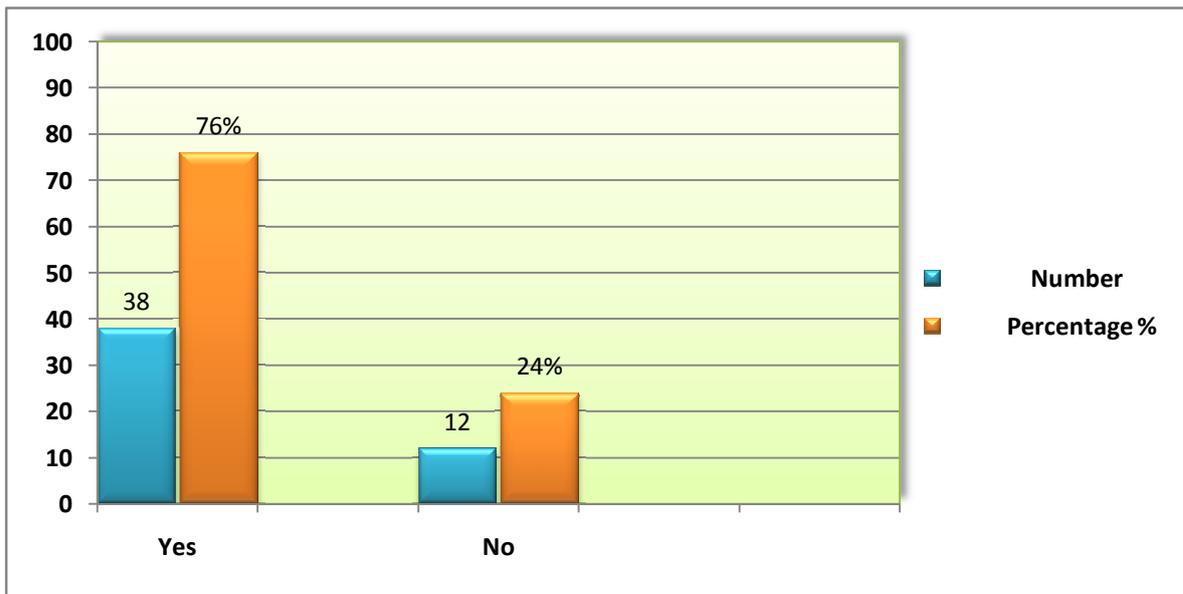
Graph7 : Students' Difficulties in Written Expression class

This question clarifies the answers of (Q4, Q5 and Q6). The answers indicates that most students (76%) confessed that they face problems when they write in written expression class, while (24%) of the sample denied the existence of any problem when they write in English. Further explanations will be provided in the next question.

Q8. If your answer is "yes", what are the aspects you have problem(s) with when writing?

Options	Number	Percentage %
Grammar	22	44 %
Vocabulary	32	64%
Spelling	16	12%
Punctuation	12	24 %

Table10 : Reasons of Students' Writing Difficulties
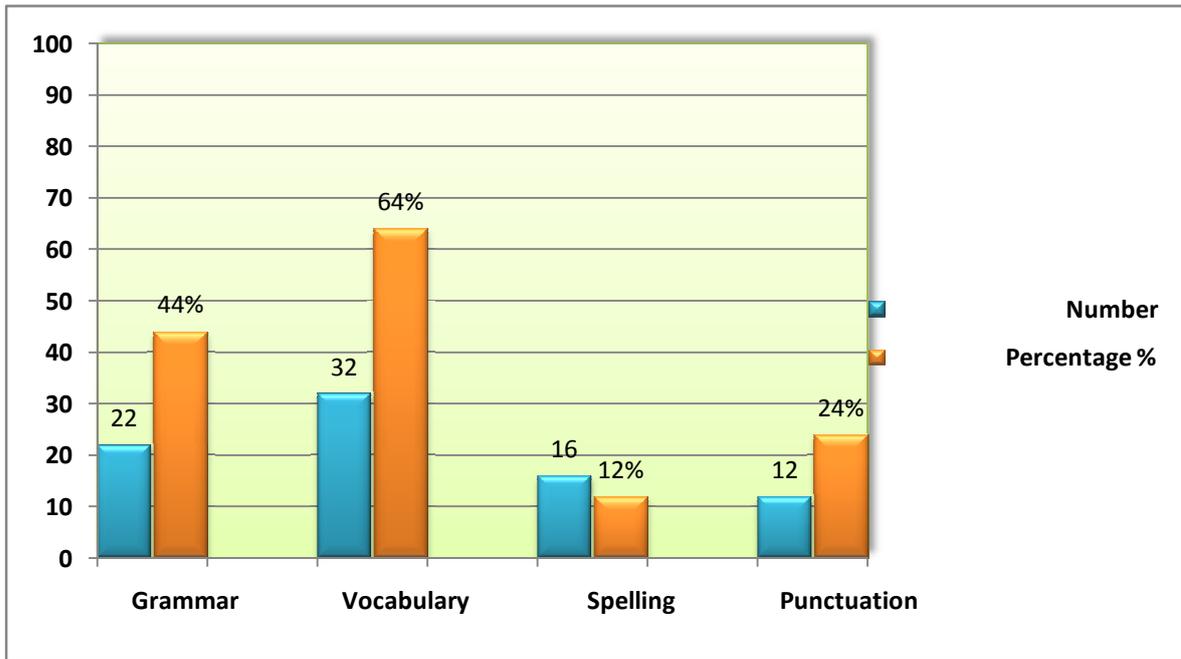
Graph8 : Reasons of Students' Writing Difficulties

This question aims at highlighting the difficulties that students face when they write in the written expression class. It helps to recognize what hinders students from writing and using language for writing communication. What can be seen from the graph above is that (64%) of the students claimed that they face some difficulties when they write; they explained that these difficulties are due to the lack of vocabulary. (44%) indicated that their writing difficulties are related to making grammatical mistakes. Then, (24%) of them state that their writing difficulties are related to making pronunciation mistakes. While (12%) of them chooses spelling mistakes.

If other, specify

Furthermore, other students added other reasons which represent the lack of motivation, self confidence and trouble in the sentence structure and poor organization. As well as the lack of interest to the subject which cause difficulties to transfer their ideas.

Q9. In written expression session do you prefer?

Options	Number	Percentage %
Individual work	14	28 %
Pair work	18	36 %
Group work	18	36 %

Table11 : Students' Preferences in Written Expression Sessions
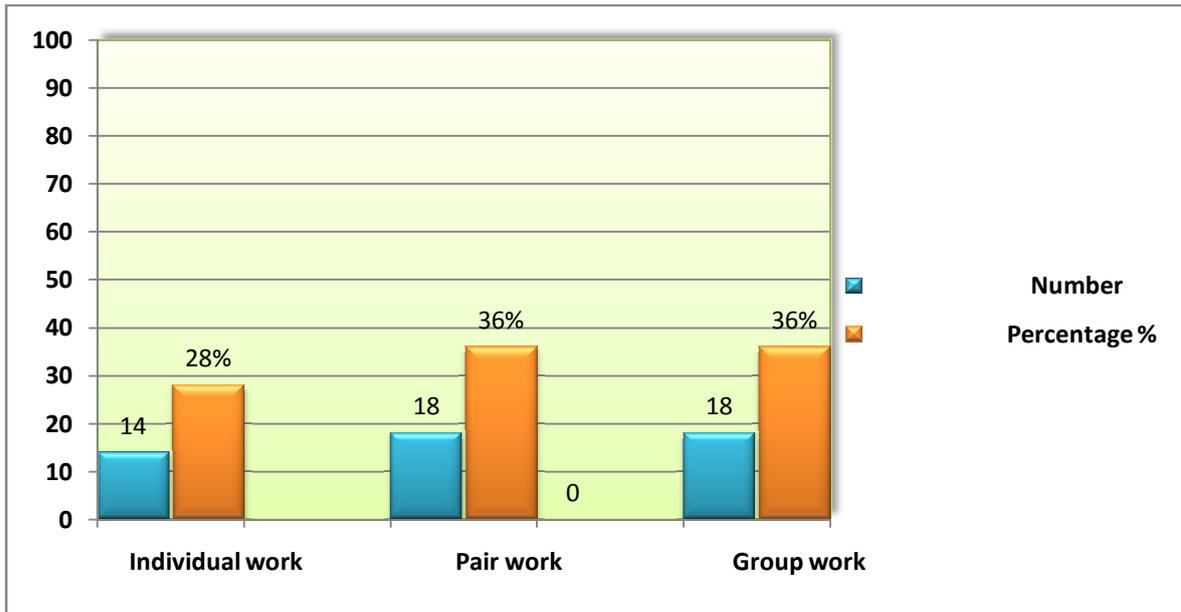
Graph9 : Students' Preferences in Written Expression Sessions

Table (11) shows that the majority of subjects (54%) prefer group work. (20%) of them like individual work, and the rest of them (26%) support pair work in written expression.

Please, justify your answer

Students who want to work individually are often autonomous learners. They explained their choice in terms of working freely and having the opportunity to express their ideas without any intervention from other students, can evaluate their level individually and determine their weak points to give their best. For those who prefer to work in pairs because they feel more comfortable when they work with their best friend in the class and help each other to achieve good work. Also Students who prefer group work indicate that in the groups' member they have different levels, which provide support and

enhance in terms of sharing ideas, information and correct each other mistakes. As well, it enables them to discuss their weaknesses and to overcome them. Thus, the student becomes more motivated to work seriously, develop the social relationship and share experience.

Section Three: Students' Perception of Cooperative Learning

Q10. Does your teacher encourage you to work cooperatively?

Options	Number	Percentage %
Yes	42	84 %
No	8	16 %

Table12 : Teachers' Enhancement to Write Cooperatively
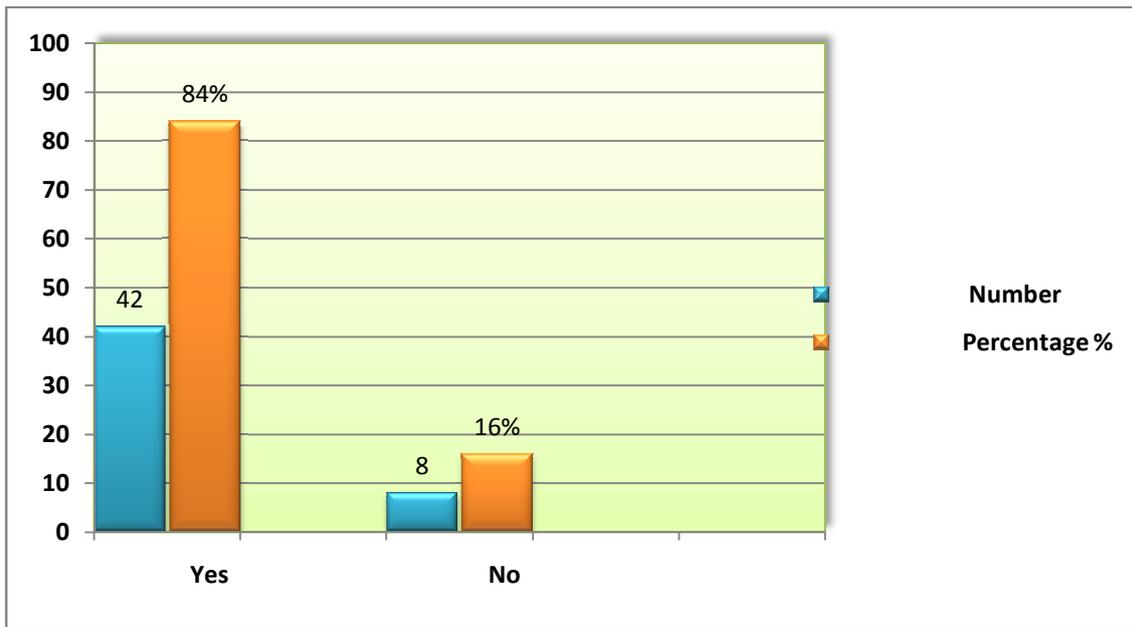
Graph10 : Teachers' Enhancement to Write Cooperatively

In this question, we asked students whether they are given the opportunity to work cooperatively in the classroom or not. (84%) of the participants said that their teachers motivate them to interact maybe through the implementation of cooperative learning. (16%) of them replied unlike others. This means that the majority the teachers seek to create an interactive learning context.

Q11. Does cooperative learning motivate you to write?

Options	Number	Percentage %
Yes	40	80%
No	10	20 %

Table13 : Students reactions to group work
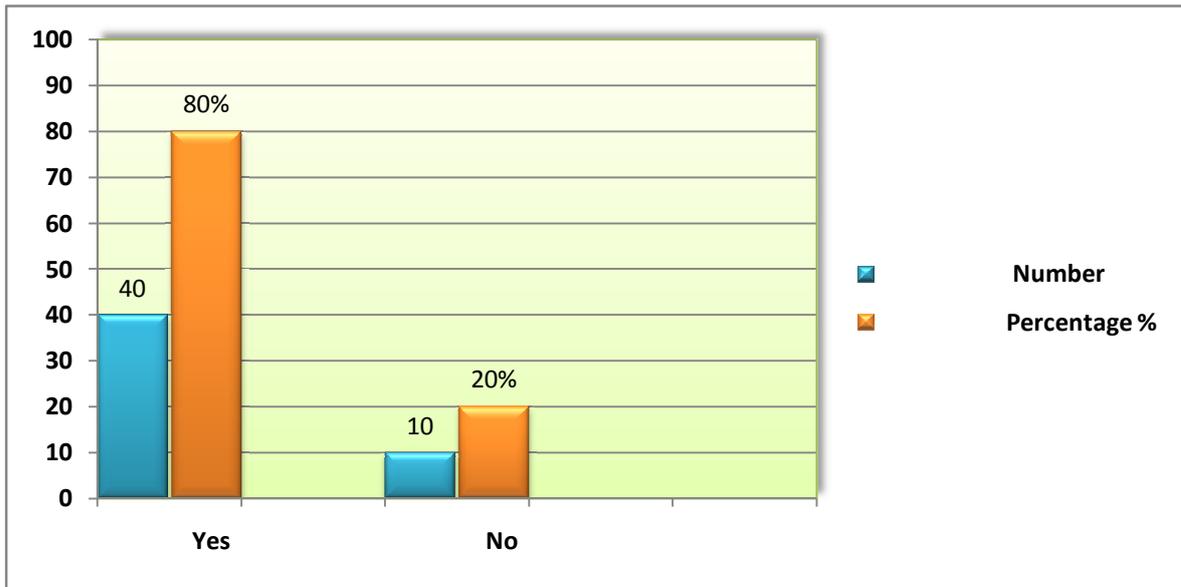
Graph11 : Students reactions to group work

According to the below table results show that (80%) of students answer "yes" which means that the majority of students motivate writing, when the teachers use the cooperative learning strategies during the session of written expression. While more than (20%) of the students answered "No" which means few of students are not motivate to write through implementing cooperative learning.

Q12. In what way this manner of learning (learning cooperatively) aids you?

Options	Number	Percentage %
Ask and respond to more questions	14	28 %
Learn to listen to different opinions	25	50%
Evaluate the performance of your peers in writing	7	14 %
Develop your social skills for getting along with others	18	36 %

Table14 : Students' Perception of the Benefits of Group Work Activities
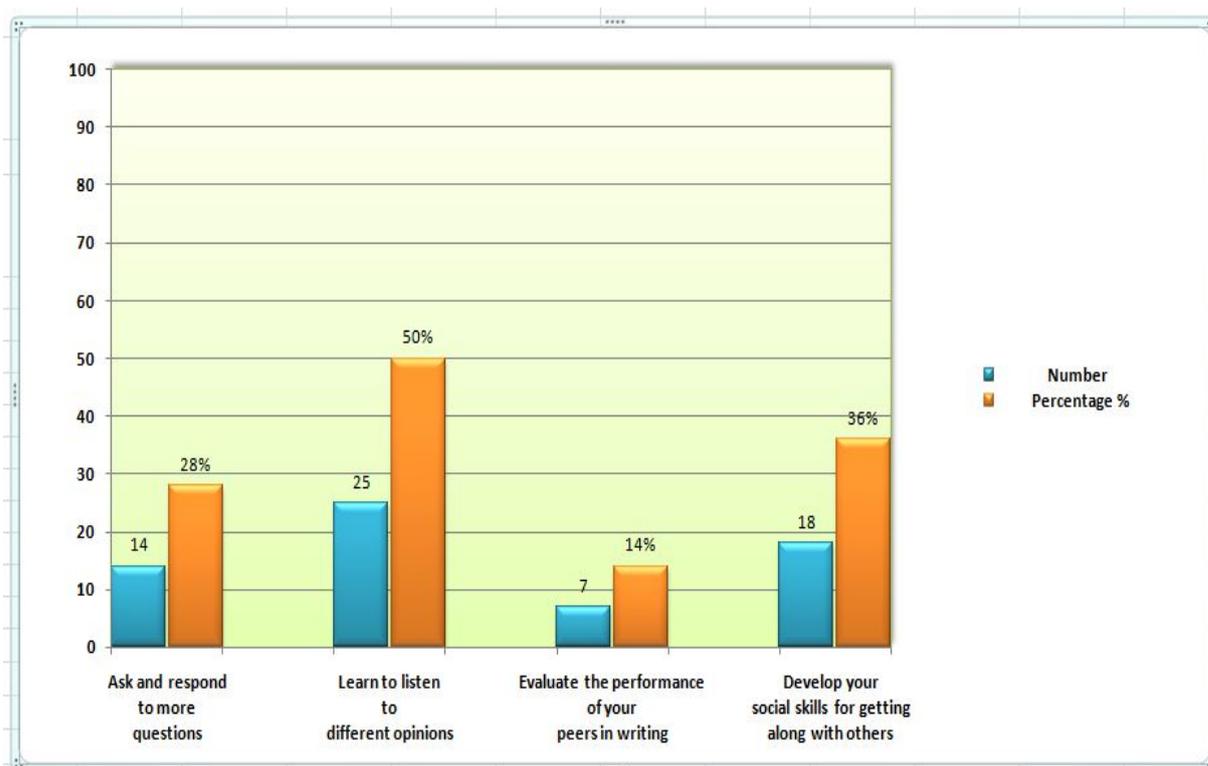
Graph12 : Students' Perception of the Benefits of Group Work Activities

Table (14) indicates that a high portion of students (50%) claimed that they learn to listen to different opinions through cooperative learning. (36%) of them viewed that cooperative learning helps them to develop their social skills for getting along with others. A portion of (28%) showed that cooperative learning is helpful because they are being able to ask and respond to more questions. While (14%) of them chose evaluating their written performance by the group mates, peers.

Q13. How do you rate working in group?

Options	Number	Percentage %
Easy	32	64 %
Difficult	18	36 %

Table15 : Students' Evaluation of Their Work in Group
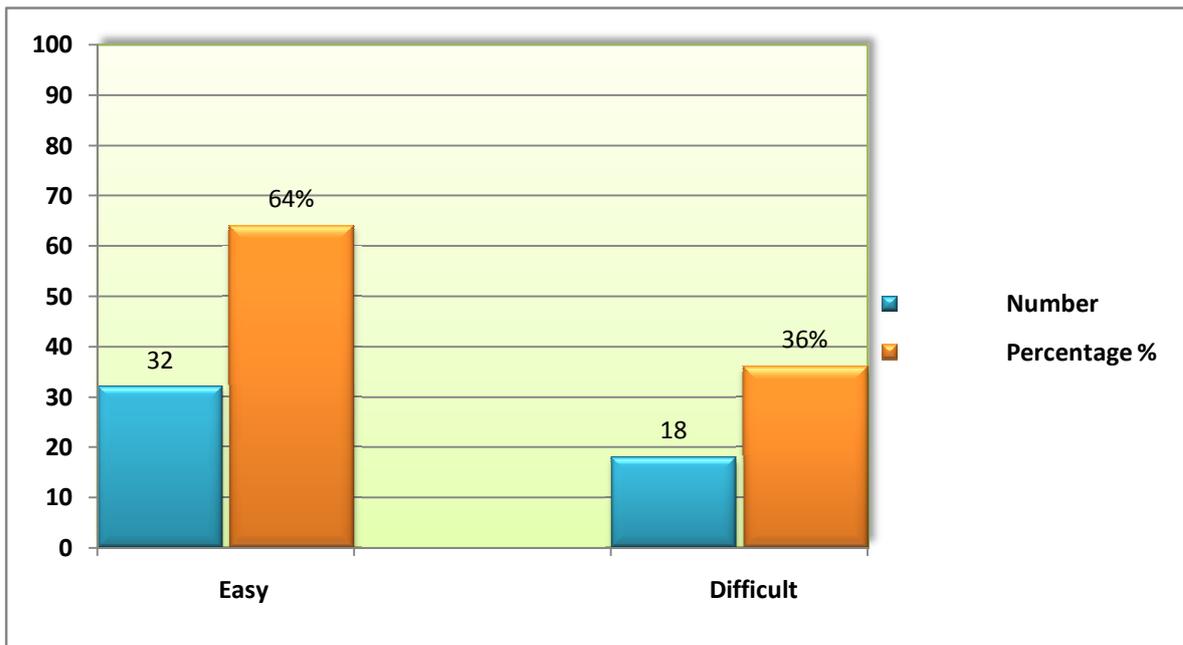
Graph13 : Students' Evaluation of Their Work in Group

The aim of this question is to evaluate student's attitude toward cooperative learning in terms of easiness and difficulty. It is noticeable from table (15) that the highest rate represents (64%) of the informants who said that working together is an easy task, on the other hand (36%) disagree, and they said that it is difficult to work cooperatively.

Say, why

Behind students' chosen options; respondents who claimed that cooperative learning is easy explained their answers in different ways. That it is an effective technique to learn and help each other to practice language and facilitate the work. Also we have different thoughts and opinions, and gain more vocabularies and words. It makes us relaxed and motivated to work in a group as well as it reduces the anxiety and the stress in learning. Nevertheless students who argued that cooperative learning is difficult stated that they prefer working individually because they find difficulties in getting along with others group members. Furthermore the group members have different levels and different methods to learn.

Q14. Does the teacher try to solve the problems faced during group work?

Options	Number	Percentage %
Yes	39	78 %
No	11	22 %

Table16 : Teachers' Involvement in Solving Students' Problems in Cooperative Learning
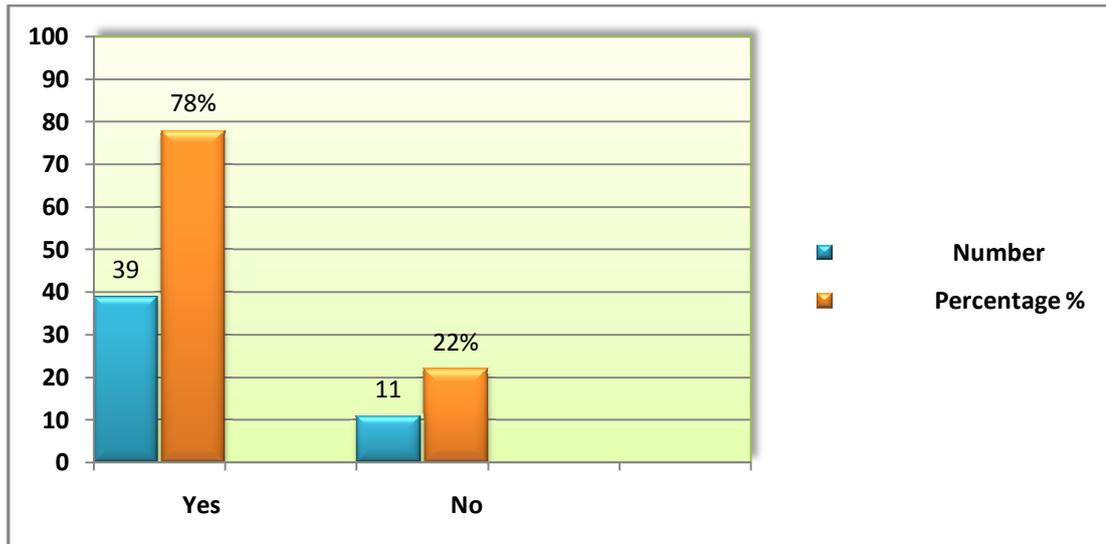
Graph14 : Teachers' Involvement in Solving Students' Problems in Cooperative Learning

The aim of this question is to see whether teachers help their students to solve the problems encountered while working together. We can notice from the results shown in table (16) the majority of students (78%) believe that the teachers should be a facilitator of the learning process and help them to solve the problems faced in group work. While (28%) of them stated that their teachers let them work without helping them during the course.

Q15. Do you think that cooperative learning is beneficial strategy help you to improve your writing skill?

Options	Number	Percentage %
Yes	38	76 %
No	12	24 %

Table17 : Students' Attitudes towards the Integration of Group Work Activities in Teaching Writing Skill
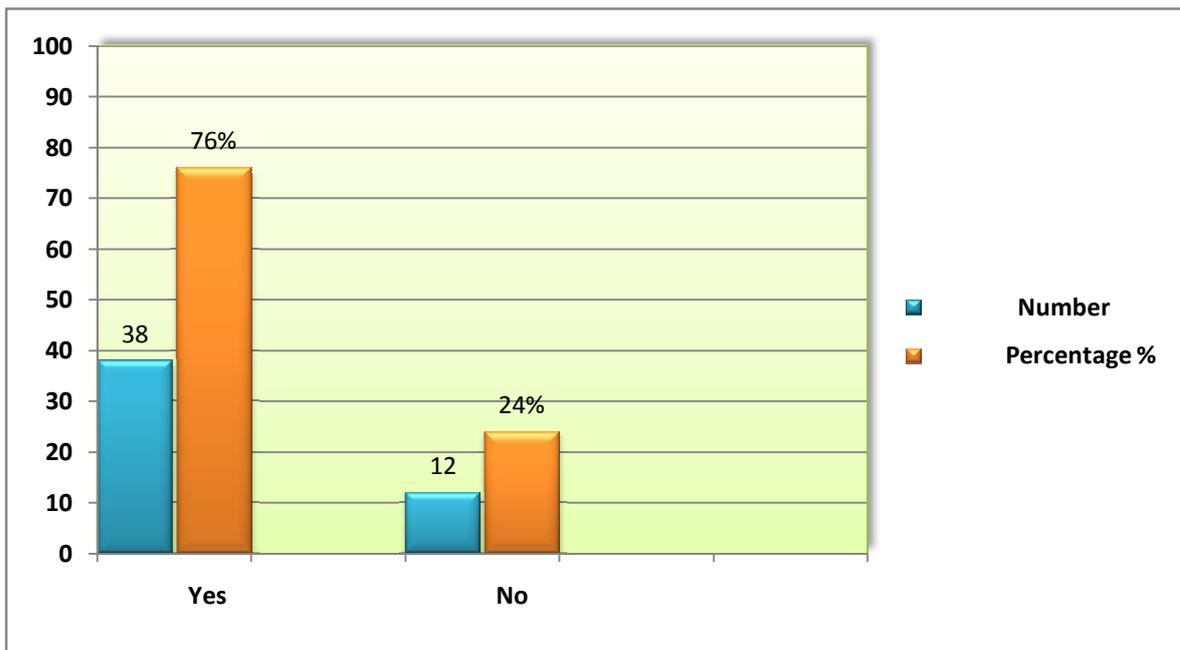
Graph15 : Students' Attitudes towards the Integration of Group Work Activities in Teaching Writing Skill

The importance of this question relies on discovering whether learners agree that cooperative learning strategy helps them to face and overcome their difficulties and improve their writing skill or not. As Table (17) shows, the majority of the respondents (76%) found that cooperative learning strategy helps them to improve their writing skill and reduce their difficulties. However (24%) of them responded negatively. They are maybe the same students who prefer to work individually.

If yes, explains

- Cooperative learning is a beneficial strategy that helps us to share ideas, information and reduce anxiety and make good work.
- Helps to improve the writing skill and correct mistakes.
- Gives a great opportunity to practice and get more familiar with the language itself.
- Shares different perspective, help notify and alert the students.
- Helps us when time is not enough during the session.
- Create a competitive and motivational atmosphere.

1.3. Discussion of Students' Questionnaire

The analysis of students' questionnaire reveals that the chosen sample contains more females than males, which means that female are more interested than males to learn English. As well as, the majority of respondents who evaluate their level in English as being average. This is a motivation factor that helps students to develop their language in the courses of written expression.

When speaking about the writing skill, the analysis shows that third-year students are interested in writing in English because they are conscious of its importance not only by transferring their ideas but also in developing other skills. However the majority of students find the writing skill difficult, only few find it easy. Therefore they indicate that when they write they face some difficulties, which they classify in terms of grammar, vocabulary, punctuation, organization and sentence structure. These difficulties can progressively disappear through practice and motivating students to write in the classroom. Besides to this the establishment of appropriate learning environment enhances students reduce their written weak points. In other words, we can say that group work encourages students interaction without putting focus on errors.

Most of students agree to work in groups because (54%) of them view that they have different level in the group, which help them sharing information, ideas and correct each other mistakes. While those who have chooses pair work (26%) said that pair work helps each other to achieve good work. (24%) of them claim that working individually is the best because they can evaluate their level and determine their weak points. In other words, we can say that group work encourage students interaction with their group mates and develop intellectual abilities.

In the analysis of the last section of cooperative learning, the students' answers indicate that most of the teachers seek to encourage learners to work cooperatively in the classroom. This shows that the majority of students consider cooperative learning as an effective and motivational factor that enhances them to write. It is obvious that most of the students find that cooperative learning helps them to develop their writing skill and get good level. This indicates that the overwhelming majority of students (76%) are aware of the importance of using cooperative learning strategy in teaching the writing skill. They

confirm that group work is helpful to improve learners' writing skill and overcome their writing difficulties.

2. Teachers Questionnaire

2.1. Administration and Aim of the Teachers' Questionnaire

The teachers' questionnaire was administered to 5 teachers of written expression in the division of English Language at the University of Biskra. They all answered the questionnaire carefully. The purpose of this is to obtain reliable qualitative and quantitative information about teachers' view about the teaching writing skills and the difficulties that EFL learners face. Also the effect of using cooperative learning as a pedagogical strategy to enhance student writing performance.

2.2. Description of teachers' questionnaire

2.2.1. Description

This questionnaire is composed of (19) questions that concern the issue under study. It is divided into three sections. Seven questions are yes or no questions. Twelve questions are Multiple Choices and one question is open-ended. In some questions teachers are asked to explain their choice to help us understand better their answers. The first section includes general information regarding the teachers' gradation, and teaching experience at university. The second section is about the teachers' perception about the importance of writing skill in EFL classes and their students' participation and writing difficulties. The third section deals with the implementation of cooperative learning as a strategy that enhances students to write and overcome these difficulties.

2.2.2. Analysis

Section One: Background Information

Q1. Qualifications

Qualifications	Number	Percentage
License	0	0 %
Magister	4	80 %
Doctorate	1	20 %

Table18 : Teacher's Qualification
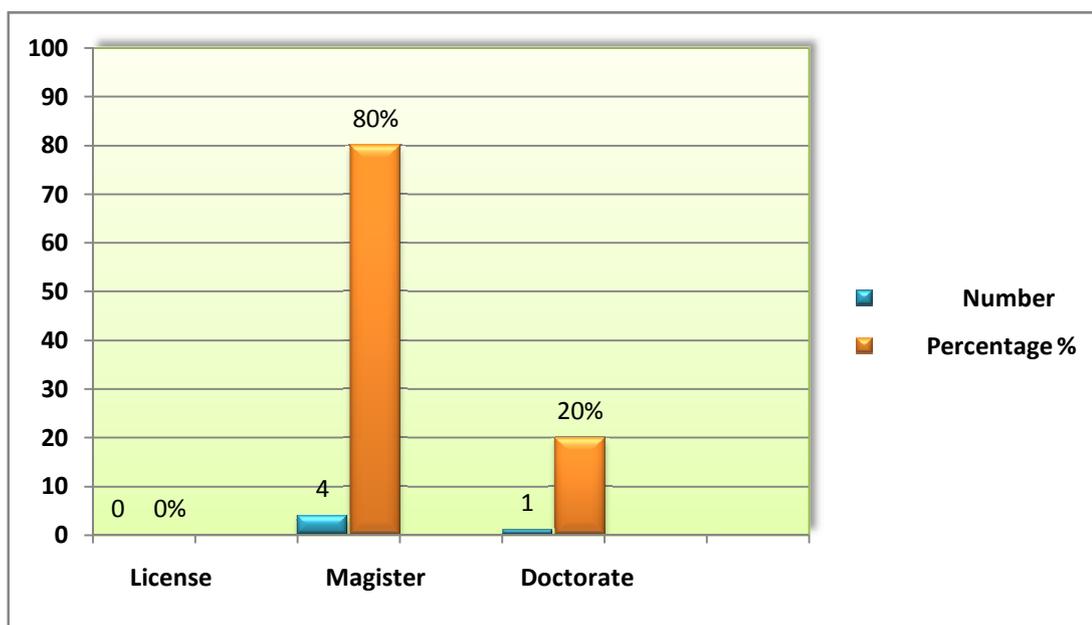
Graph16 : Teacher's Qualification

The table (18) above shows that the overwhelming majority of teachers (80%) hold MA (Magister) degree and only (20%) hold PhD (Doctorate). No one holds license degree. This means that, they are expert teachers.

Q2. How long have you been teaching English at University?

Years	Number	Percentage
From1-5 years	0	0 %
From 5-10 years	4	80 %
More than 10 years	1	20 %

Table19 : Teaching Experience at University
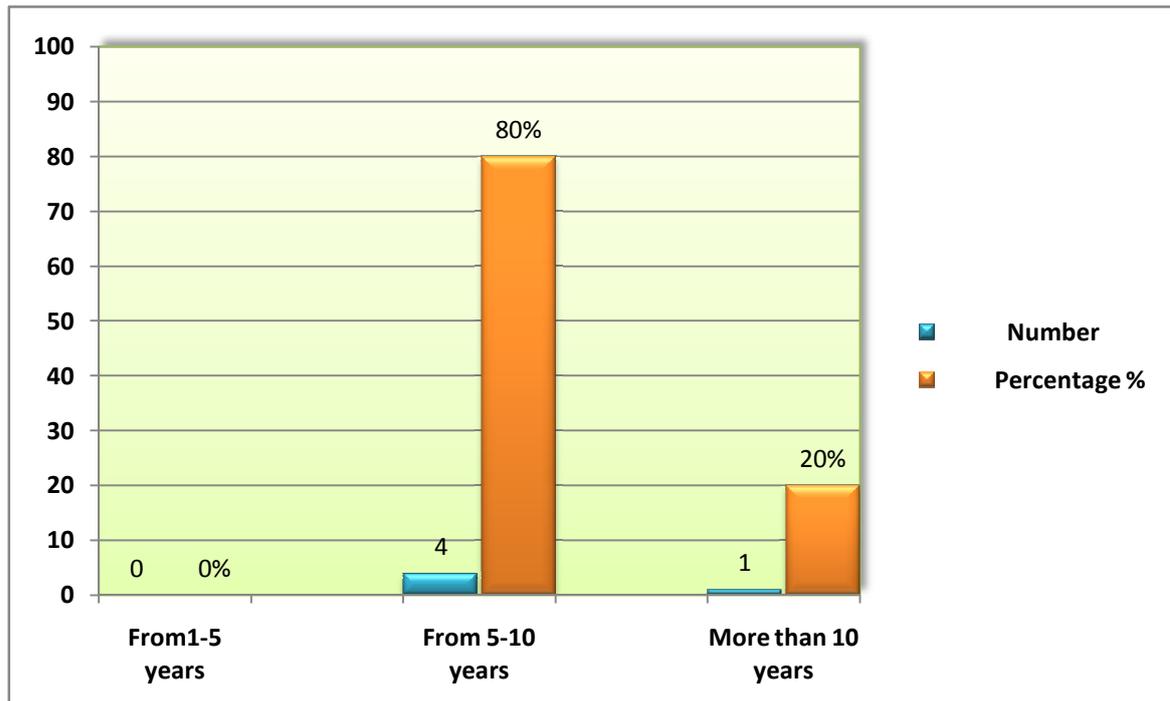
Graph17 : Teaching Experience at University

The answers to these questions reveal teachers' years of experience in teaching English at university. Table (19) shows that among the five teachers no one is novice. While (80%) of the sample experienced teachers with (5-10 years), (20%) have more than ten years. This indicates that the division of English Language has teachers from different generations. Most of them are experienced teachers with no less than five years of experience.

Section Tow: Teaching the Writing Skill in EFL Classes

Q3. Put in order of difficulty the following skills

Choice	Number	Percentage
Productive skills	3	60%
Receptive skills	2	40 %

Table20 : Order of skills' difficulties
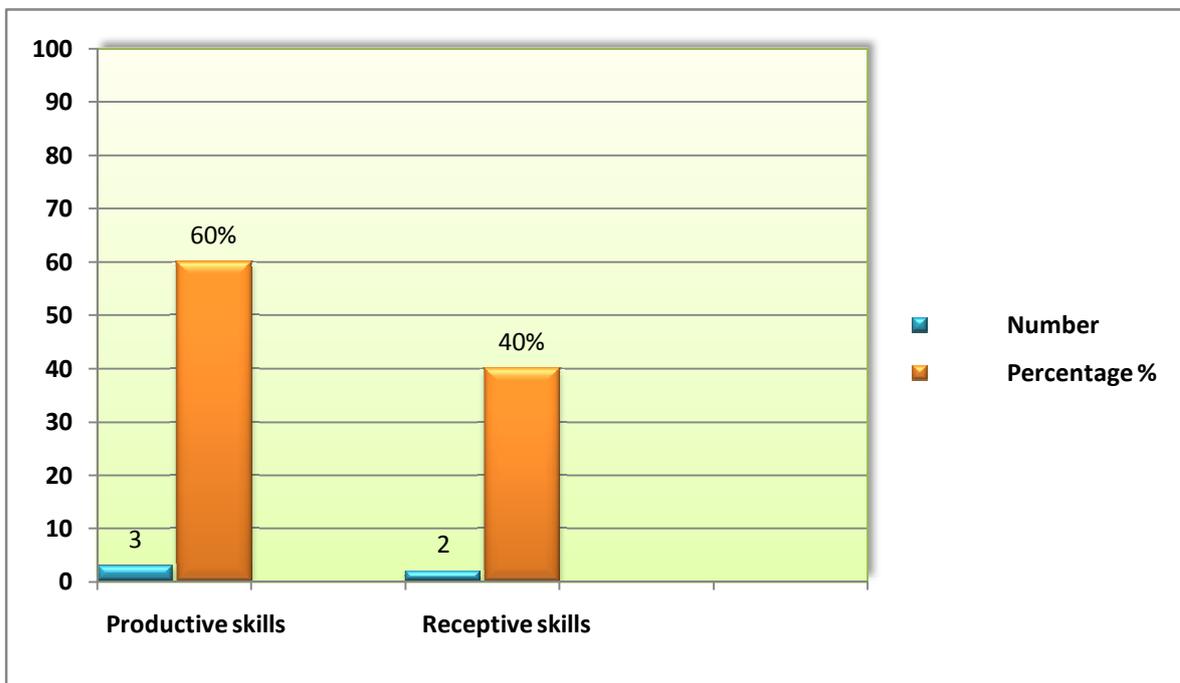
Graph18 : Order of skills' difficulties

Through this question, we are attempting to find out what skill is the most difficult according to teachers. What is noticeable from the results which are shown above is that the majority of respondents (60%) classify productive skills are the most difficult, because students find obstacles especially in writing. Whereas (40%) of teachers think that receptive skill are the difficult one for students.

Q4. To what extent do you think that writing is an important skill in learning a foreign language?

Options	Number	Percentage
Very much	5	100 %
Much	0	0 %
Little	0	0 %
Not important	0	0 %

Table21 : Teachers Opinions about Students' awareness of the importance of the writing skill
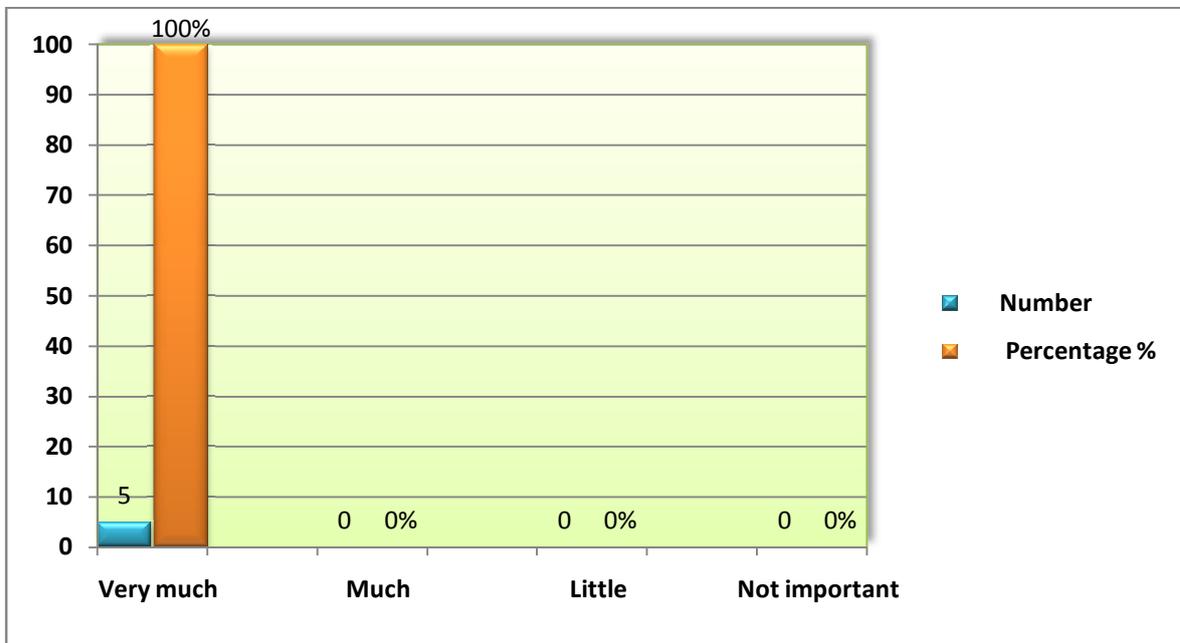
Graph19 : Teachers Opinions about Students' awareness of the importance of the writing skill

Our objective through this question is to discover the importance of writing for teachers. The results from the table show that all teachers of the sample (100%) see the importance of writing very much in learning English. No one chose much, little and not important. It seems that all the teachers are aware of the significance of writing skill when teaching and learning English as a foreign language.

Q5.Do you think that time allotted for written expression modules is sufficient?

Option	Number	Percentage
Yes	0	0 %
No	5	100 %

Table22 : Teachers Evaluation of the Time Allotted for Written Expression
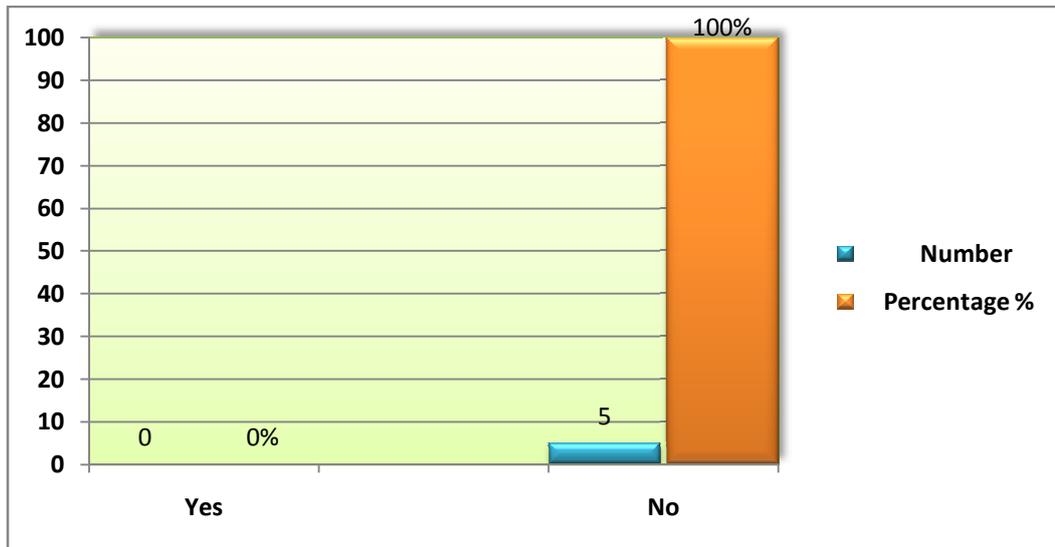
Graph20 : Teachers Evaluation of the Time Allotted for Written Expression

According to table (22), show that most of teachers (100%) are not satisfied about the time allotted for the written expression module because three hours per week do not allow students to improve their writing proficiency and practice effectively a foreign language especially in overcrowded classes. It should occupy a large part of the teaching time. However, no one says "yes", it is sufficient for foreign language learners since they can write which means writing is more difficult and very important because it has big effects on other skills.

Q6.What do you consider in writing

Option	Number	Percentage
Form	0	0 %
Content	0	0 %
Both	5	100 %

Table23 : Teachers' Consideration in Writing
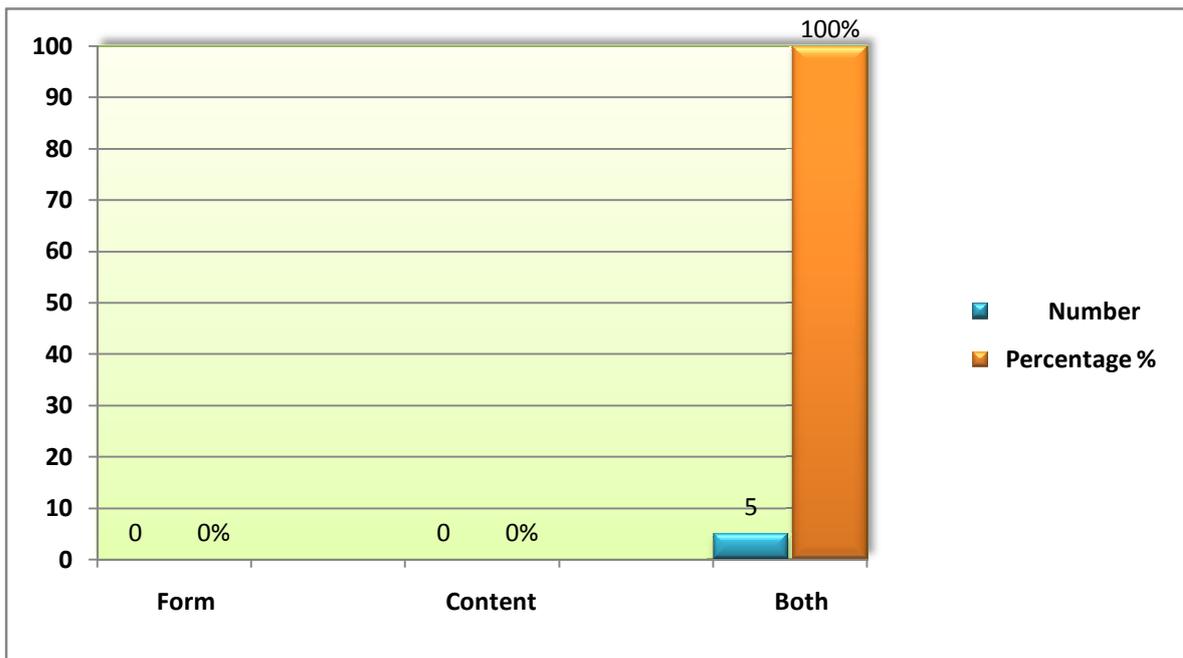
Graph21 : Teachers' Consideration in Writing

It is clear from the histogram that all of the sample choose both form and content (100%). They consider the meaning, theme which has to be relevant, clear and logic. This content needs also to be organized in such a way to form a coherent.

Q7. Are your students motivated to write in the classroom?

Option	Number	Percentage
Yes	2	40 %
No	3	60 %

Table24 : Students' Attitude toward Writing
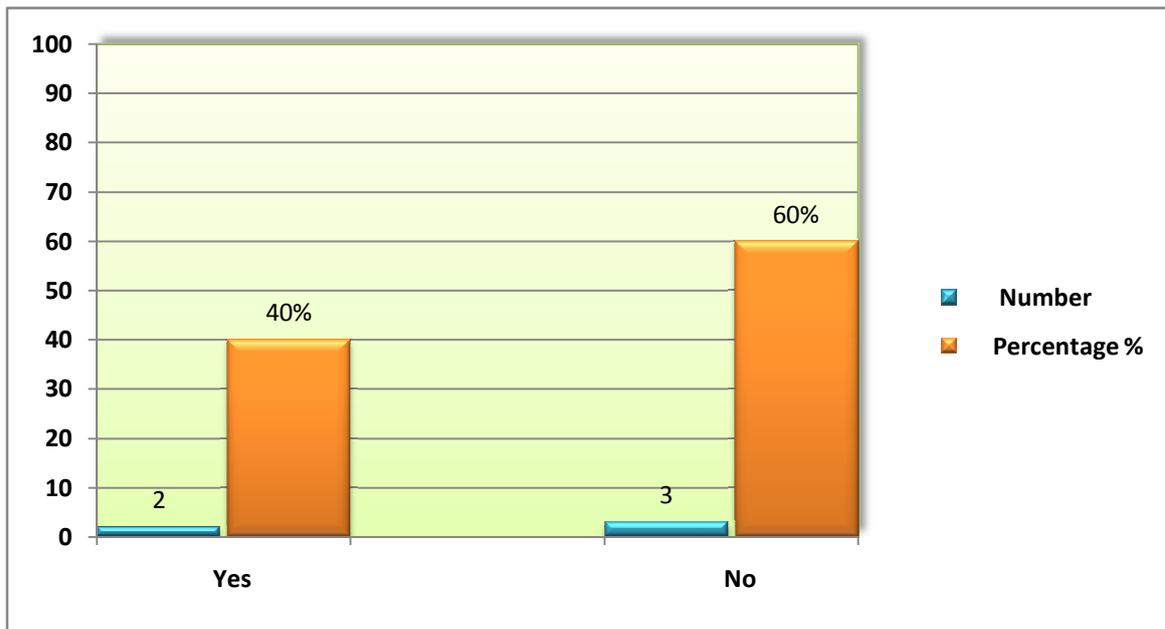
Graph22 : Students' Attitude toward Writing

What is noticeable from the results which are shown above is that the majority of teachers (60%) say that their students are not motivated to write in the classroom. (40%) of teachers believe that their students are motivated to write. Thus, the lack of motivation may affect the quality of writing process which means that foreign language learners have problems or difficulties in writing skill.

If no, please explain why

- Many students find it difficult to express themselves in writing due to the lack of experience and deficiencies in language.
- They want but they can't because they are short of ideas, vocabulary, they don't know how to manage a coherent and cohesive piece of writing free of any mistake.
- Writing in the foreign language seems to be very difficult for non native speakers of English. Most students struggle to master grammar plus writing mechanics and style which are different from native language.
- Lack of motivation and overcrowded classes.

Q8.Your students' level of writing proficiency in English is:

Option	Number	Percentage
High	0	0 %
Average	4	80 %
Low	1	20 %

Table25 : Teachers' Evaluation of Students' Level of Writing Proficiency
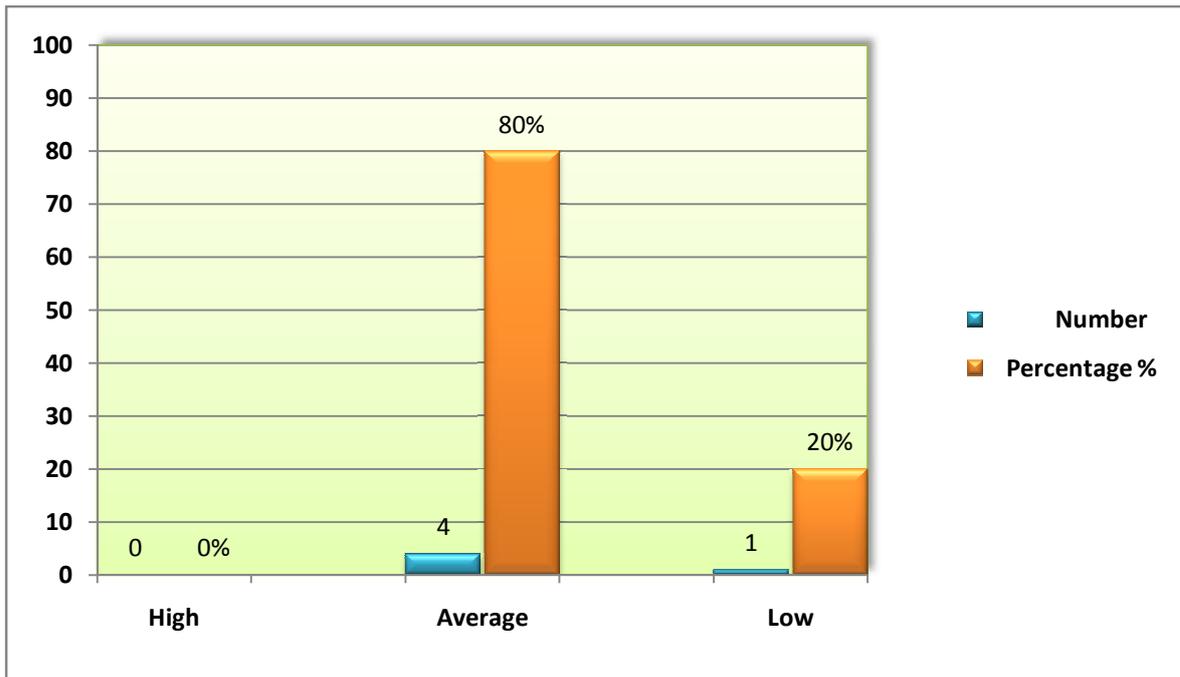
Graph23 : Teachers' Evaluation of Students' Level of Writing Proficiency

Table (25) shows that (80%) of teachers claimed that their students 'written proficiency is average. Only (20%) of them claimed that their level is low. No one claimed that their students' level is high. These students need more practice and more effective and motivating teaching techniques to improve their writing skill.

Q9. What are the most frequent problems that your students face in the written expression session?

Option	Number	Percentage
Grammar	0	0 %
Vocabulary	0	0%
Spelling	0	0%
Punctuation	0	0%
All of them	5	100%

Table26 : Students' Frequent Problems in Written Expression Session
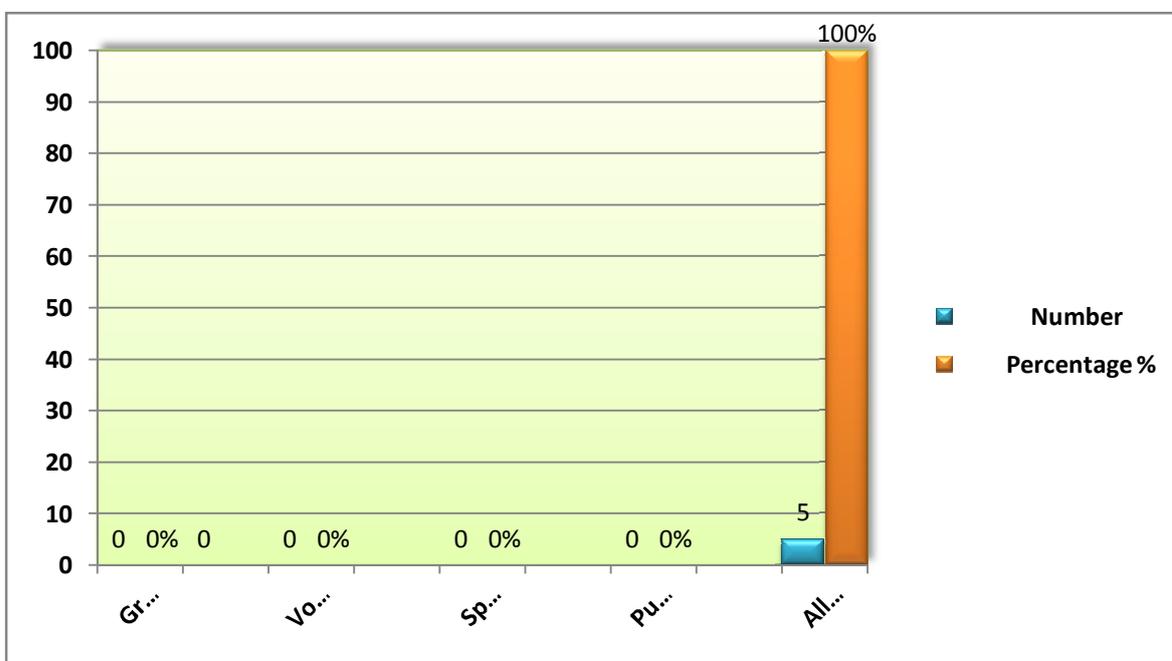
Graph24 : Students' Frequent Problems in Written Expression Session

The aim of this question is to determine students' major lacks. All of the teachers confirm that their students face problem in all aspects of writing (Grammar, vocabulary, spelling and punctuation). Besides to this, teachers add some difficulties like:

- Sentence structure and organization of ideas.
- Cohesion and coherence of the sentence.

- Style, most students seem to translate from first language to second language. On account of that the teachers find her style is stilted, awkward and "doesn't round English".

- Lexical problems related to word choice.

- Lack of motivation.

Option	Number	percentage
Yes	1	20 %
No	2	40 %
Often	2	40 %

Table27 : Teachers' Correction of Students' Mistakes
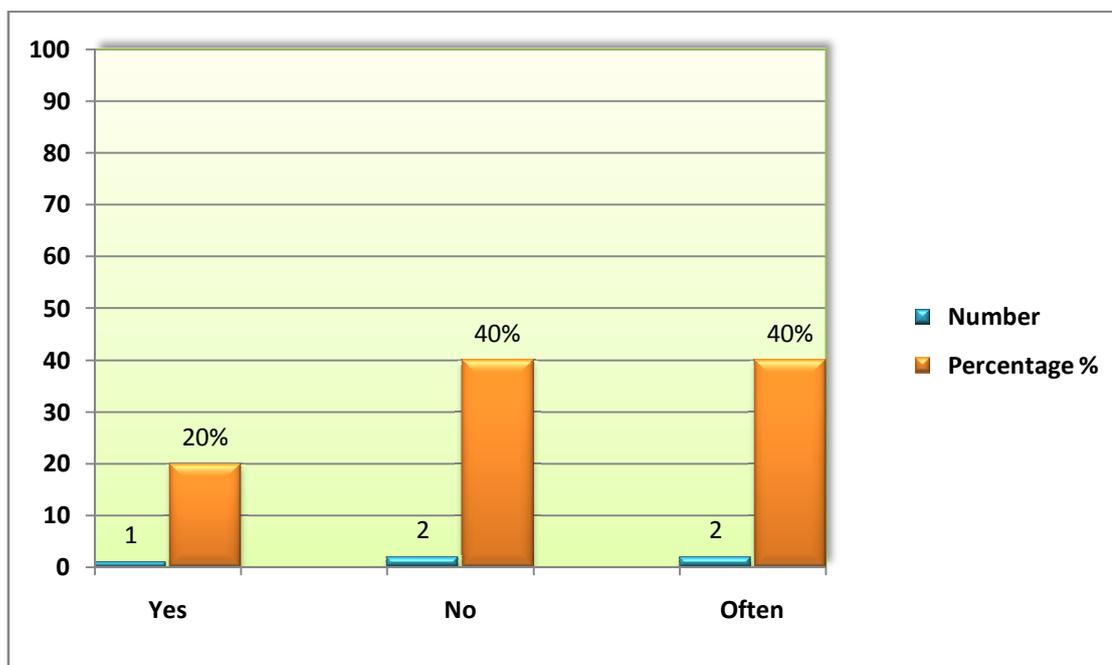
Graph25 : Teachers' Correction of Students' Mistakes

According to teachers' answers, (20%) answered that they correct every mistake that students make in order to reduce their mistakes by mentioning types of errors. However, (40%) of respondents chose "often" that is the teacher should not correct every mistake to make students rely on themselves, by correcting their own errors. In addition to this, (40%) of teachers do not correct every mistake the student because a great deal of correction it takes a long time.

Q11. What is the role of the teacher in the writing process?

Option	Choices	Percentage
Audience	2	20%
Assistants	3	60%
Evaluator	5	100%
Examiner	1	10%

Table28 : Teachers' Role in the Classroom
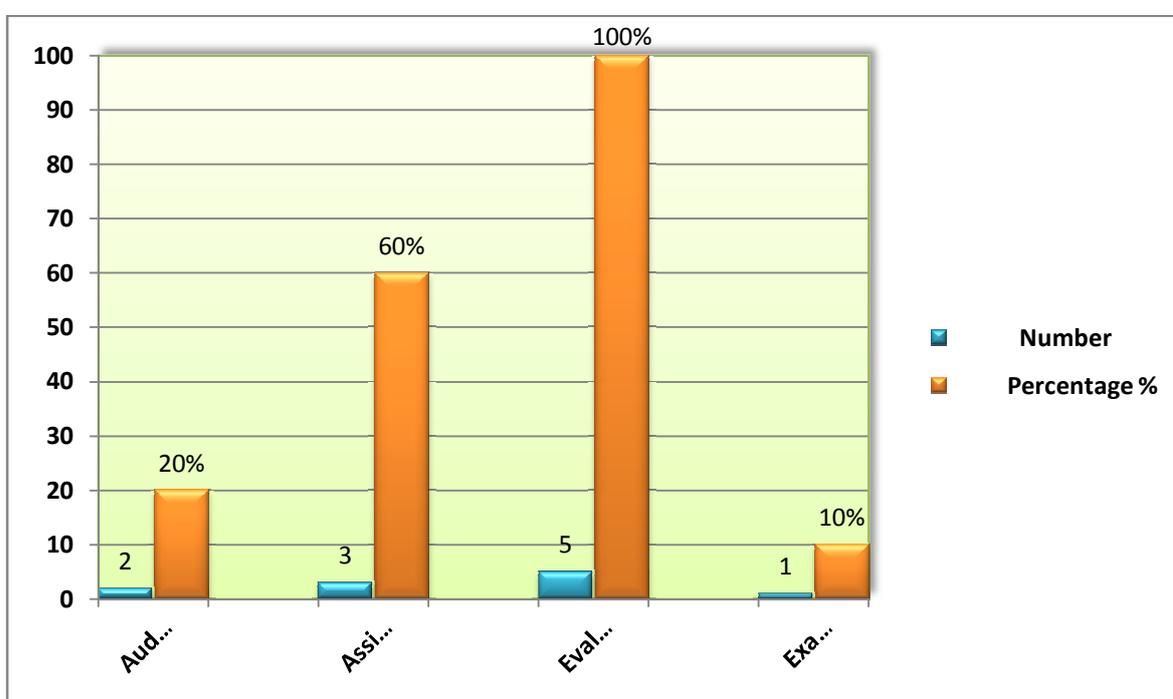
Graph26 : Teachers' Role in the Classroom

This question aims to highlight the teachers' role in the writing process. The results from the table (28) indicate that (100%) of all teachers regard their role as evaluators. Then, (60%) of them choose the role of assistants. (20%) of the teachers consider that they are audience. While10% of teachers consider their role in the classroom as examiners. This demonstrates the significant roles that are played by teachers in the classroom. They differ because they need to consider the type of the task and what students need.

Section Three: Teachers' Incorporation of cooperative learning

Q12. Do you adopt cooperative learning in your class?

Option	Number	Percentage
Yes	5	100 %
No	0	0 %

Table29 : The Implementation of Cooperative Learning
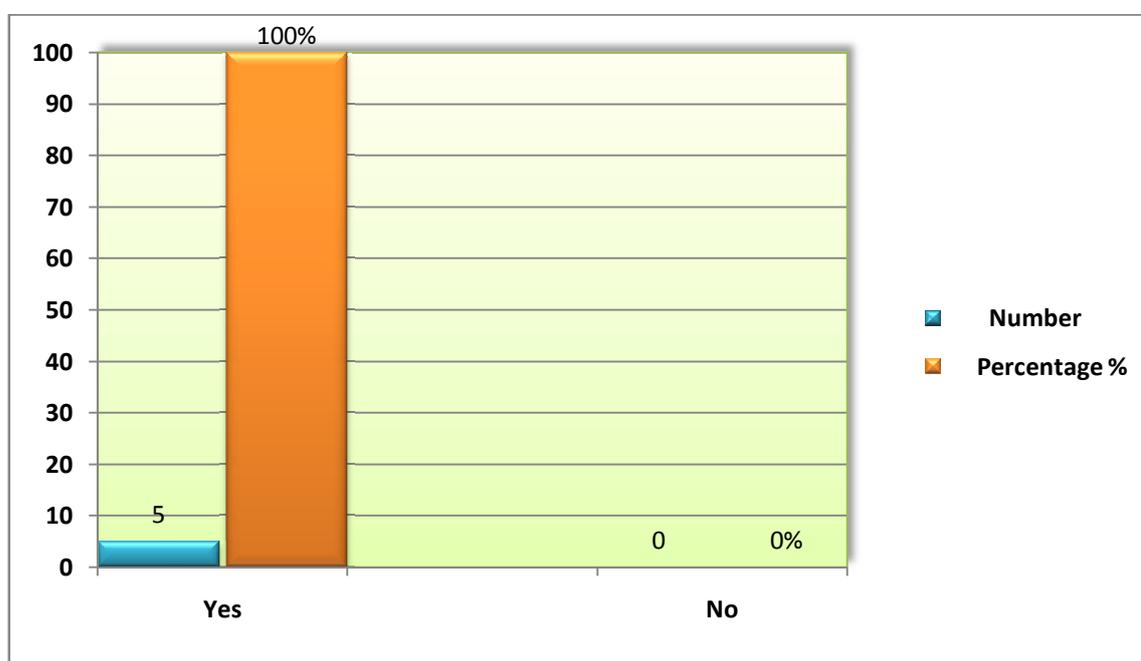
Graph27 : The Implementation of Cooperative Learning

In this item, all of the subjects (100%) claimed that they implement cooperative learning in their classes. This shows that all teachers are aware of its various advantages and benefits. Thus, cooperative learning is a very common strategy among teachers to encourage and increase students' interaction in order to fulfill the task and to decrease student anxiety and shyness.

Q13. How often do you design groups when teaching written expression?

Option	Number	Percentage
Always	1	20%
Often	4	80%
Rarely	0	0%
Never	0	0%

Table30 : Teachers' Frequency of Using Groups
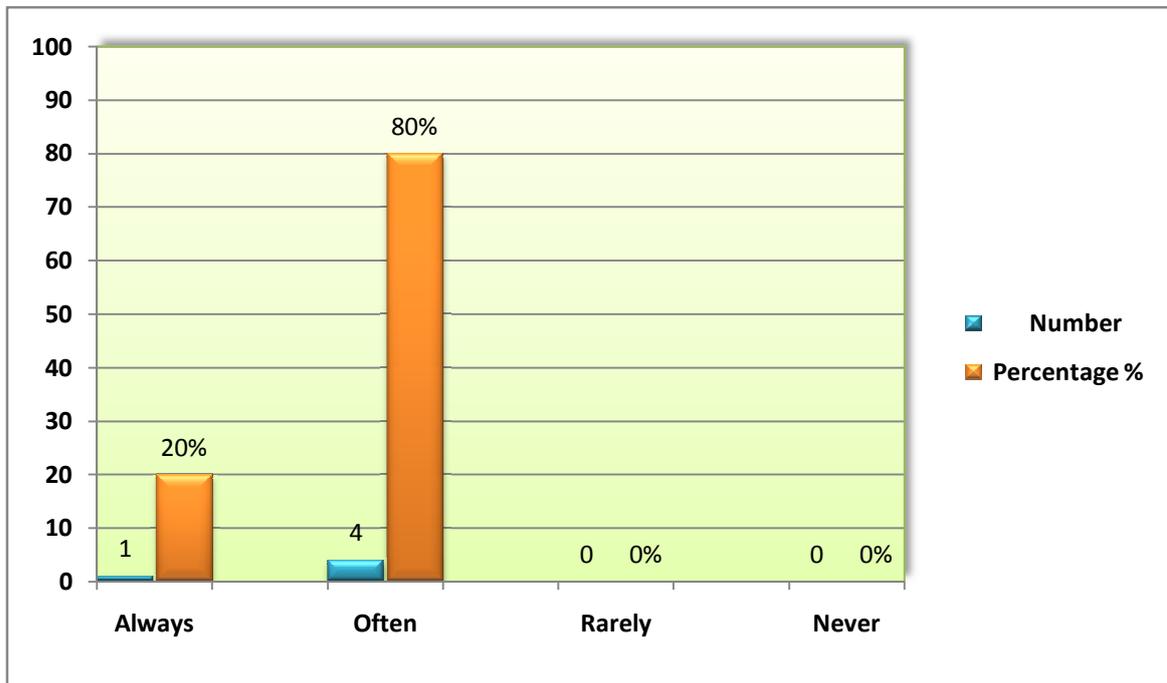
Graph28 : Teachers' Frequency of Using Groups

Table (30) shows that (60%) of teachers often design groups in the class. (20%) of them design sometimes groups when teaching written expression. They believe that group work technique should be regularly implemented in written expression classes because it has proved its effectiveness in teaching the writing skill. No one chose rarely or never.

Q14. How many students are there in each group?

Option	Number	Percentage
Pairs	1	20 %
Small groups	4	80 %
Large groups (more than 5-6)	0	0 %

Table31 : Teachers' division's of the Group Members' Number
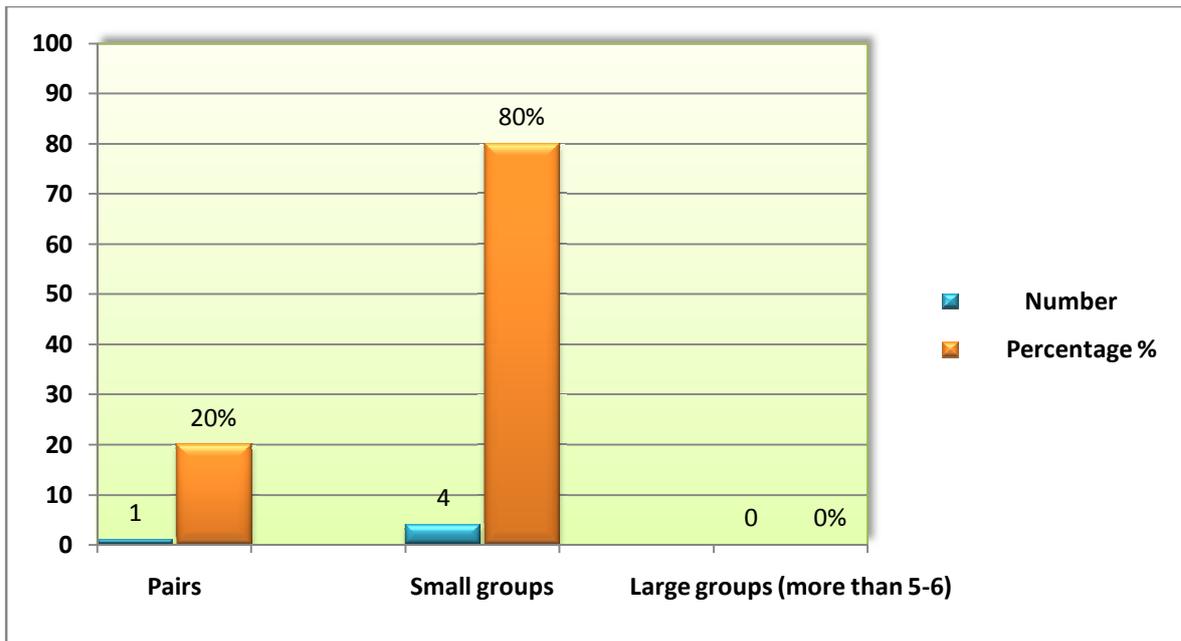
Graph29 : Teachers' division's of the Group Members' Number

The findings illustrate that (20%) of the teachers divided groups of students into pairs. Whereas the highest percentage (80%) were working in small groups by students. In the other hand no one organizes students in large groups (more than 5-6). From what this we can say that the teachers use small groups in order to offer the opportunity for students to discuss, exchange and practice the language successfully to complete the task.

Q15. Do you set up the groups on the basis of?

Option	Number	Percentage
Gender	0	0%
Proficiency	2	40 %
Student performance	3	60 %

Table32 : Teachers' Criteria to Set Groups
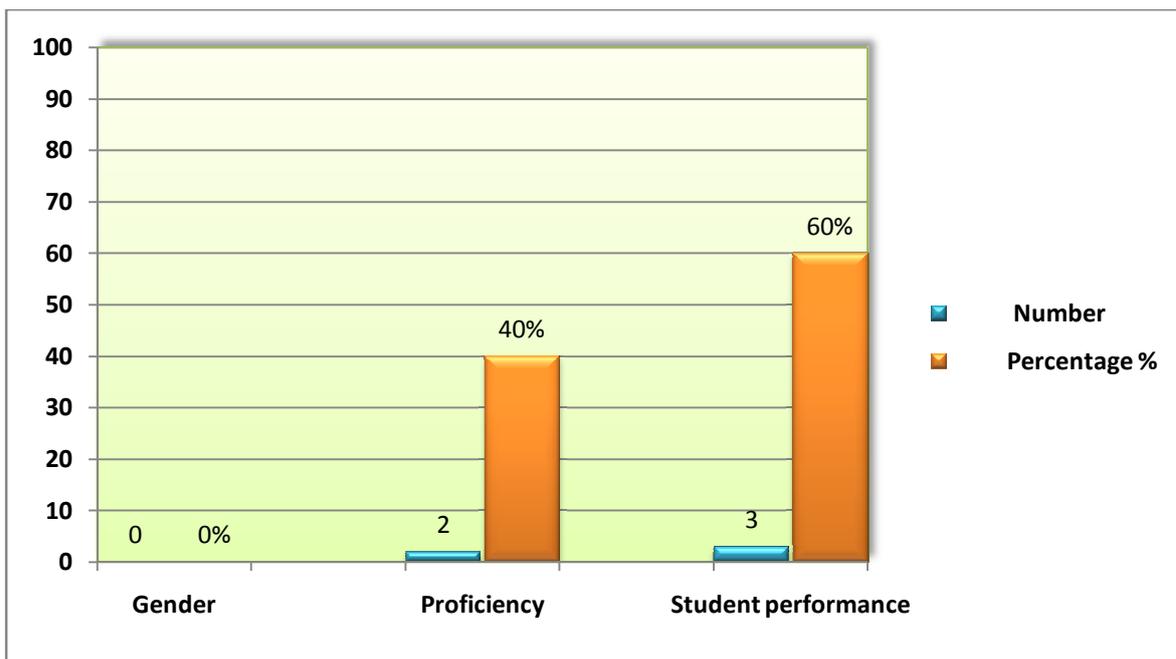
Graph30 : Teachers' Criteria to Set Groups

When we ask teachers about their criteria for setting groups in their classes, (40%) of the teacher stated that they set up the groups according to students proficiency, while (60%) of them claimed that they set groups according to students' performance. No one chose gender when they form the groups. Here we ask them to specify others if they can, and most of them said that they let the students free to organize groups and choose the mates they prefer, this makes them comfortable to work (anxiety is reduced and motivation is enhanced).

Q16. Do you raise your students' awareness towards the value of cooperative work?

Option	Number	Percentage
Yes	5	100 %
No	0	0%

Table33 : Teachers' Role in Raising Students' Awareness towards the Value of Cooperative Learning
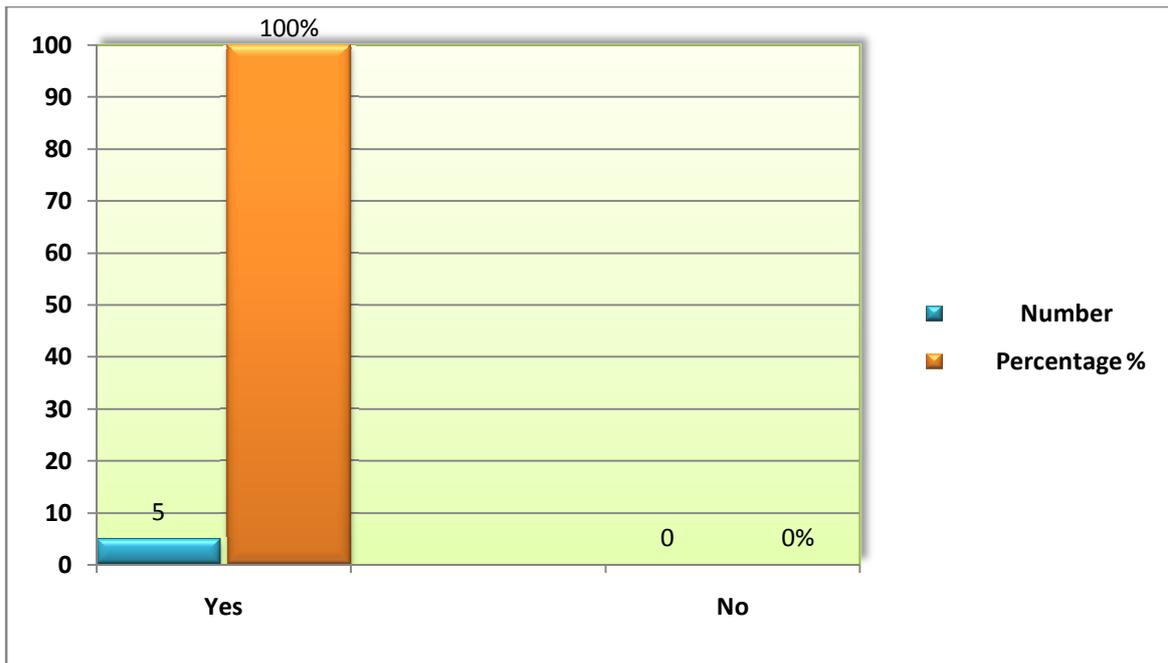
Graph31 : Teachers' Role in Raising Students' Awareness towards the Value of Cooperative Learning

The results shown on the table that all teachers (100%) raise their students' awareness towards the value of cooperative work. This may facilitate and makes students more involved in the learning-teaching process.

If yes, how

- By explaining its benefits and advantages.
- Planning group works whenever necessary.
- Encouraging students to write together to benefit from each other and to support each other.

- Varying the techniques and the written activities as well.

Q17. Do your students report to you problems when working in groups?

Option	Number	Percentage
Yes	5	100 %
No	0	0 %

Table34 : Reporting Students Problems when Working in Groups
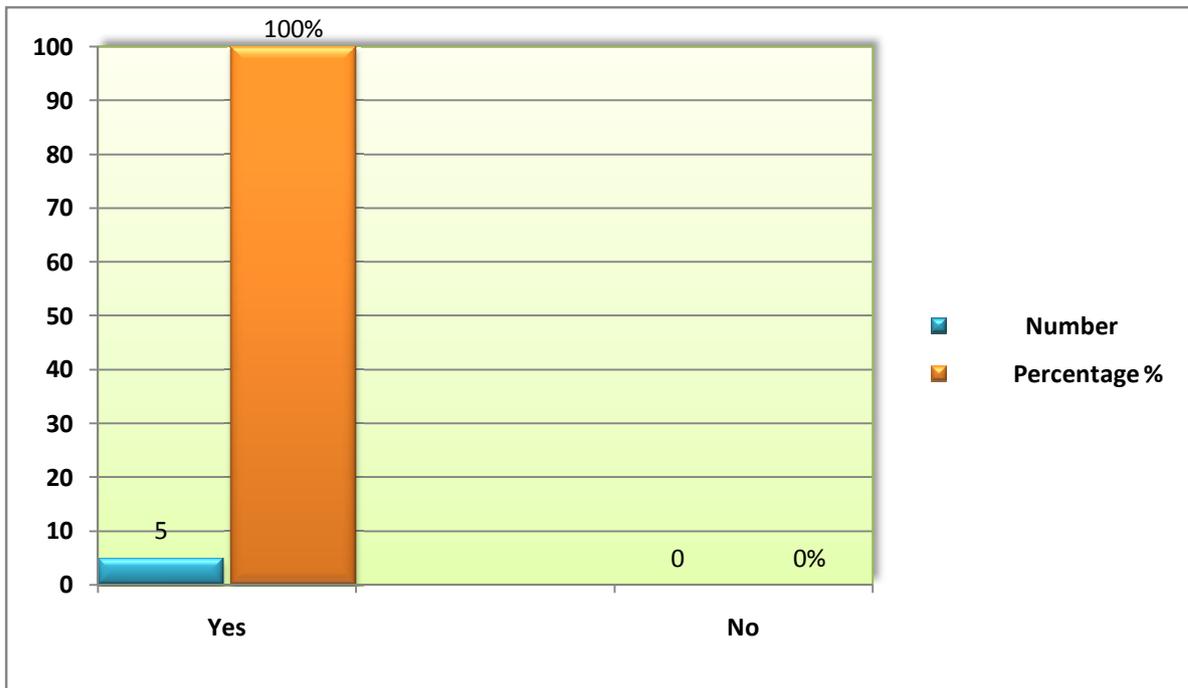
Graph32 : Reporting Students Problems when Working in Groups

What is remarkable in the table above that all of the respondents (100%) have answered "Yes", that their students report their problems when working in groups. According to these teachers, those problems are:

- Generally, someone works as a leader and wants to impose his or her ideas and control things. Also, some students may be passive and do not want to help, so all work is done by one or two.
- Speaking in the mother tongue instead of English and having conflicts items of ideas.

- Lack of cooperation i.e. some learners rely on one member of the group to do the job for all.
- The problem of not perceiving on the same time the same thing.

Q18. Do you think that cooperative learning is an effective teaching strategy to enhance learners to write?

Option	Number	Percentage
Yes	4	80 %
No	1	20 %

Table35 : Teachers' Evaluation of Cooperative learning strategy
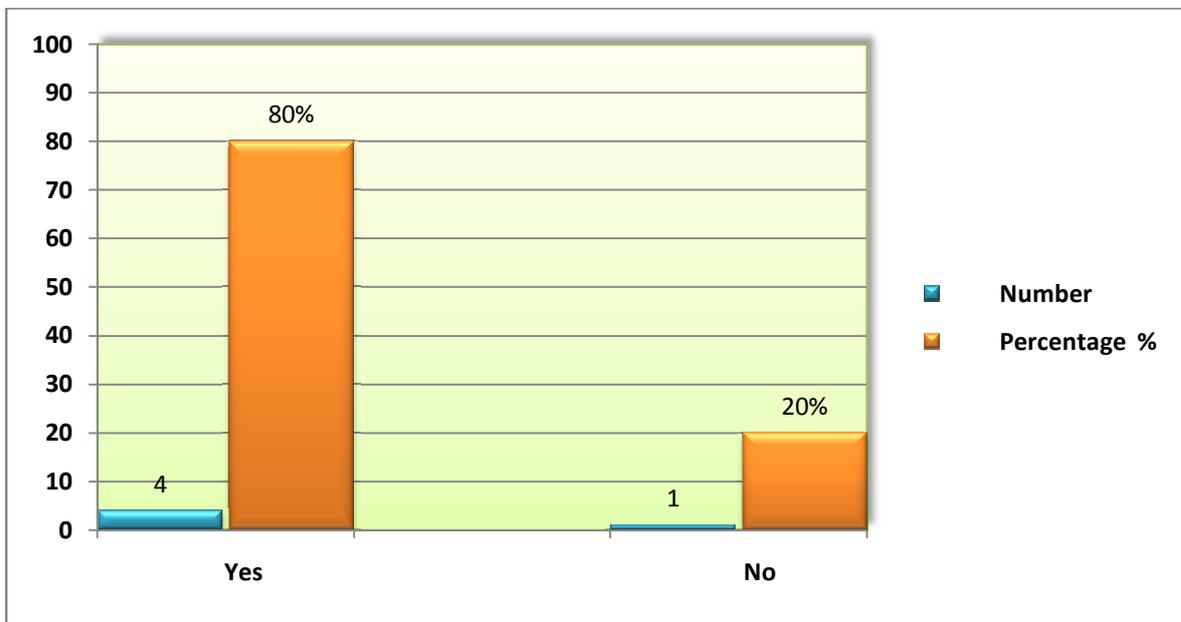
Graph33 : Teachers' Evaluation of Cooperative learning strategy

According to their experience in teaching written expression, all of the teachers except one confirm that cooperative learning is an effective strategy to enhance learners' writing proficiency.

Why

Yes

- Cooperation work reduces anxiety (when a task is shared with its aims and difficulties).
- It promotes collaboration and interaction (students relay on each other to perform something).
- It gives them more self-confidence.
- It develops the learner's collaboration when writing together.
- It promotes their writing performance.
- It motivates them to learn (as they share their ideas, knowledge and correct mistakes).

No

It needs a careful preparation and practice besides a good knowledge of students' performance and learning style. It also takes time and effort.

Q19. How does cooperative learning help students engage in writing tasks?

It encourages peer correction. Fear and anxiety are reduced and motivation is varied, so students feel more at ease. Also they can share their language in term of language aspects as they share knowledge too. It's the ability to create a fun and supportive atmosphere for writing. Hence they learn to appreciate them and to rely on their peers to edit or improve their writing via sharing, exchanging, discussing and analyzing ideas collectively. This positive attitude develops a positive engagement towards the writing tasks, and helps introvert students to get rid of their uncounted problems.

2.3. Discussion of teachers' questionnaire

In fact, the analysis of teachers' questionnaire tends to have the opportunity to know the central ideas of teachers for leading this dissertation. In the first section concerning background information, the majority of teachers have Magister degree and few of them have Doctorate this means that our teacher are expert. Teachers experience in teaching English varied from one teacher to another but most of them are experienced teachers with no less than five years of experience.

The analysis of the second section about writing skill shows that the majority of teachers agree that productive skills are more difficult one than receptive skills for students to learn. In the other hand all, of them are aware and confirm the importance of learning writing in a foreign language, but the time allotted is not enough to practice language.

Teachers claim that they consider both form and content when students write because writing is an important task to be fulfilled. In terms of student's motivation, teachers find that most of students are not motivated to write in English and this is due to several reasons like lack of experience, motivation. The teachers say that their students writing proficiency is average. However they show the desire to develop their writing skill through their work, but some writing problems like grammar, vocabulary, punctuation, cohesion and organization of ideas inhibit them. For this reason, teachers suggest that students should be motivated by teachers by being assistant and audience instead of evaluator and examiner. Since the correction of mistakes is an essential component, for that some teachers indicate that they don't prefer to correct their students' mistakes in order to give them an opportunity to correct by themselves and improve their writing. While other often correct students' mistakes because they should focus on particular problem that students face.

Concerning the third section of cooperative learning, all of the teachers adopt cooperative learning in their classroom. They often design group when teaching written expression. However the difference for teachers lies in two aspects. The first one, the number of students which makes the majority of teachers work with small groups of students and in pairs. The second criterion is to set up the groups that include gender, proficiency and students performance, in order to give all the group members a chance to work actively. Besides to this all of the teachers raise their student's awareness towards cooperative learning by explaining their value, advantages and positive interdependence.

All teachers of the sample affirm that cooperative learning is an effective strategy that helps students to improve their writing proficiency and reduce anxiety and fear. Also, it is a way to exchange ideas and information and encourage peer correction. Furthermore, it creates positive atmosphere and gives them more self confidence.

Conclusion

In this conclusion, we present the main findings in relation to the research questions addressed by this study. The analysis of the learners' and teachers' questionnaires revealed positive results that prove our hypothesis that cooperative learning is really an effective strategy to enhance learners' writing. This shows that both teachers and students have demonstrated their awareness of the significance of cooperative learning in teaching the writing skill. Also they confirmed that the writing skill is better learned when students work with each others in groups.

General conclusion

Improving Foreign language teaching and learning process is the basic goal of many researchers. They have developed many instructional approaches and strategies that can influence the success of the teaching process and students outcomes. Written production is one of the most important and the most difficult skill that needs more attention because it reflects the extent of teaching method efficacy. This study is conducted to investigate the effect of implementing cooperative learning as a strategy to improve writing proficiency of third year LMD students at Biskra University. We hypothesized that using cooperative learning enhance students to employ language, in which they develop writing proficiency and reduce their difficulties.

This dissertation consists of three chapters. Chapter one deals with the theoretical issues that concern the writing skill, its importance and pedagogical difficulties. Chapter two provides an overview of cooperative language learning, benefits strategies and their goals in classroom. Chapter three is devoted to the field work of the study. It is concerned with the analysis and the interpretation of the data collected from students and teachers questionnaires to test the research hypothesis.

Thus, cooperative learning is an effective strategy that helps learners to develop the writing skill and the teacher to address the problem of low English writing skill and low motivation in English foreign language teaching. These positive results confirm the value of adopting cooperative learning in written expression classes to hold great impact for accelerating Student's achievement.

According to learners' and teachers' answers, we conclude that EFL students face various problems during writing and they would to develop it which they can decrease through the implementation of cooperative learning.

Recommendations

On the light of the results which are concerned with the study of the effect of using cooperative learning as a strategy to enhance third- year EFL students' writing skill. Some recommendations are proposed for teachers and students to improve English teaching and learning outcomes in general and the writing skill in particular.

For Teachers

1. Teachers need to expose their students to the crucial role of writing skill and to make them aware   of acceptable style of writing.
2. Teacher should create relative and appropriate atmosphere to reduce hesitation and psychological factors like anxiety and shyness that affect their writing production and increase classroom interaction
3. Activities should be planned according to students' interests, needs, and capacities to promote their motivation and stimulate their writing.
4. Teachers should put emphasis on the most essential students requirement and correct their mistakes as they should explain to them that they make progress when they learn from their mistakes.
5. Teachers must be fully aware of the benefit and importance of cooperative learning as a strategy to support students to participate in the classroom
6. Teacher should explain to their students the value of cooperative learning strategies and training them to improve blended learning possibilities.

For Students

1. Students should recognize the importance of writing skill and try to make their best effort to write effectively.
2. Students must be aware of their writing problem by practicing language inside and outside the classroom and believe in their abilities.
3. Students need a strong linguistic platform in order to develop the writing skill.
4. Students should guide and consult each other when working cooperatively for building cohesive group work and developing positive attitude.

5. Students should be benefited with communicative activities through which they negotiate meaning, learn from each other, exchange ideas, develop social relationships and practice language in different situations and motivating each other.

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Appendices

Appendix (A): Students' Questionnaire

Appendix (B): Teachers' Questionnaire

Appendix (A) : Student's Questionnaire

Dear students,

We are investigating the significance of cooperative learning as a strategy to improve learners' writing performance in EFL classes. We will be grateful if you provide us with the necessary answers to the following questionnaire either by ticking the appropriate boxes or by making full statements whenever necessary.

N.B The results of the dissertation are based on your responses. Be sure that your answers will be kept anonymous and confidential.

Benyahia Soumia

Section one: the Student's Profile

Q1. Please, specify your gender

    a. Female   ☐

    b. Male   ☐

Q2. How long have you been learning English at university?

………………………………………………………………………………………………

Q3. How do you evaluate your level in English?

    a. Excellent   ☐

    b. Average   ☐

    c. Poor   ☐

Section two: Student's attitudes towards the writing skill

Q4. Does writing interest to you?

    a. Yes   ☐

    b. No   ☐

Q5. How do you find writing in English?

    a. Very easy   ☐

    b. Easy   ☐

    c. Difficult   ☐

    d. Very difficult   ☐

Q6. To what extent written expression courses help you improve your writing skill?

    a. Very much   ☐

    b. Some how   ☐

    c. Not very much   ☐

    d. Not at all   ☐

Q7. Do you face difficulties when you write in classroom?

    a. Yes   ☐

    b. No   ☐

Q8. If your answer is "yes", what are the aspects you have problem(s) with when writing?

    a. Grammar ☐

    b. Vocabulary ☐

    c. Spelling ☐

    d. Punctuation ☐

If other, specify

………………………………………………………………………………………….……

………………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………….

Q9. In written expression session do you prefer?

    a. Individual work ☐

    b. Pair work ☐

    c. Group work ☐

Section three: student's attitudes toward cooperative group work

Q10. Does your teacher encourage you to work cooperatively?

    a. Yes ☐

    b. No ☐

Q11. Does cooperative learning motivate you to write?

    a. Yes ☐

    b. No ☐

Q12. In what way this manner of learning (learning cooperatively) aids you?

    a. Ask and respond to more questions? ☐

    b. Learn to listen to different opinions? ☐

    c. Evaluate the performance of your peers in writing? ☐

    d. Develop your social skills for getting along with others ☐

If other, specify

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

Q13. How do you rate working in group?

    a.   easy   ☐

    b.   difficult   ☐

Say, why

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

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

Q14. Does the teacher try to solve the problems faced during group work?

    a. Yes ☐

    b. No ☐

Q15. Do you think that cooperative learning is beneficial strategy help you to improve

your writing skill?

    a. Yes ☐

    b. No ☐

If yes, explain

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

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

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

Thank you for your Cooperation

Appendix (B) : Teacher's Questionnaire

Dear teacher,

You are kindly requested to fill in this questionnaire which is an attempt to gather information needed for the accomplishment of a master dissertation. We are investigating the significance of using cooperative learning to improve learners' writing performance in EFL classes. We will be grateful if you can help us in this research by answering these questions. So please, give us precise answers as you can. Tick (√) your answer(s) in the corresponding box (es), and make a full statement whenever necessary.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Benyahia Soumia

Section one: background information

Q1. Qualifications:
   a. BA (License) ☐

   b. MA (Magister) ☐

   c. Ph .D (Doctorate) ☐

Q2. How long have you been teaching English at University?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

Section two: Teaching the Writing skill in EFL classes

**Q3**. Put in order of difficulty the following skills

   a. Listening ☐

   b. Speaking ☐

   c. Reading ☐

   d. Writing ☐

Q4. To what extent do you think that writing is an important skill in learning a foreign language?

   a. Very much ☐
   B. Much ☐
   c. Little ☐
   d. Not important ☐

Q5. Do you think that time allotted for written expression modules is sufficient?

   a. Yes ☐
   b. No ☐

Q6. What do you consider in writing

    a. Form ☐

    b. Content ☐

    c. Both ☐

Q7. Are your students motivated to write in the classroom?

    a. Yes ☐

    b. No ☐

If no, please you explain why?

………

………

……

Q8. Your students' level of writing proficiency in English is:

    a. High ☐

    b. Average ☐

    c. Low ☐

**Q9.** What are the most frequent problems that your students face in the written expression session?

    a. Grammar

    b. Vocabulary ☐

    c. Spelling ☐

    d. Punctuation ☐

If other, specify

………

………

……

Q10. Do you correct every mistake the students make?

    a. Yes ☐

    b. No ☐

   c. Often ☐

Q11. What is the role of the teacher in the writing process?

   a. Audience ☐

   b. Assistants ☐

   c. Evaluator ☐

   d. Examiner ☐

Section 3: Teachers' Incorporation of cooperative learning

Q12. Do you adopt cooperative learning in your class?

   a. Yes ☐
   b. No ☐

Q13. How often do you design groups when teaching written expression?

   a. Always ☐
   b. Often ☐
   c. Rarely ☐
   d. Never ☐

Q14. How many students are there in each group?

   a. Pairs ☐

   b. Small groups ☐

   c. Large groups (more than 5-6) ☐

Q15. Do you set up the groups on the basis of?

   a. Gender ☐

   b. Proficiency ☐

   c. Student performance ☐

If other, specify

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

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

Q16. Do you raise your students' awareness towards the value of cooperative work?

    a.   Yes ☐

    b.   No ☐

If yes, how?

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

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

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

Q17. Do your students report to you problems when working in groups?

    a. Yes ☐

    b. No ☐

If yes, what are they?

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Q18. Do you think that cooperative learning is an effective teaching strategy to enhance learners to write?

    a. Yes ☐

    b. No ☐

Why?

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Q19. How does cooperative learning help students engage in writing tasks?

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الملخص

تعليم الطلاب كيفية تطوير مهارة الكتابة ومساعدة بعضهم البعض عند العمل بشكل تعاوني هو عامل مهم في تحقيق التقدم في نوعية التفاعل ومستوى الانجاز في الكتابة. هذه الدراسة هي محلولة للتحقيق وتسليط الضوء على الآثار المترتبة في تنفيذ التعليم التعاوني كإستراتيجية لتحسين كفاءة الكتابة. كذلك تهدف إلى تحديد ما إذا كانت مهارة الكتابة عند الطلاب سوف تتحسن من خلال هذه الإستراتيجية. استنادا على ما تم ذكره, افترضنا انه إذا استخدم مدرسي اللغة الانجليزية التعليم التعاوني في صف الكتابة, هل سوف تتحسن مهارة التلاميذ في الكتابة. لإثراء هذه الدراسة بمعطيات قيمة اعتمدنا المنهج الوصفي باعتباره الأنسب لهذه الدراسة, و تم استخدام استبيانين لجمع البيانات المناسبة. احديهما موجه لطلاب السنة الثالثة لمجموعة مكونة من (50)عينة, والأخر من اجل خمسة من أساتذة اللغة الانجليزية وتحديدا الذين يدرسون مهارة الكتابة بجامعة محمد خيضربسكرة. النتائج المتحصل عليها بينت أن التعليم التعاوني إستراتيجية فعالة في تدريس مهارة الكتابة لأنه لها تأثير إيجابي على تعلم الطلاب، وتطوير مهارة الكتابة وزيادة الحافز الكتابة عند الطلاب. وأخيرا، تم اقتراح مجموعة من التوصيات لكل من المعلمين والطلاب على تطوير مهارة الكتابة في اللغة الأجنبية.