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**Cooperative Learning Groups in an EFL Grammar
Classes: A Learners' Boost Outcomes
The Case of Second Year EFL Students at Tlemcen
University**

This Dissertation is submitted to the Department of English as a Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Master's Degree in Language Studies.

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DEDICATIONS

To my grandparents who taught me to never give up.

To my parents who encouraged me to pursue my personal goals in this life.

To all my family and friends.

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not appear in these acknowledgments, they shall always be cherished and remembered in my heart.

Abstract

The present investigation aims at shedding light on the methods used by EFL instructors when teaching grammar to 2nd year LMD students of English at Tlemcen University. However, the research is specifically motivated by the examiner's interest about the current teaching which is built around the process of learners' personal reliance. They are invited to ask and answer, debate, and contributing in problems' solving situation rather than passively absorbing the linguistic forms of language. One of the methods in which all the previous criteria are covered is cooperative learning. Thus, the general enquiry of this study is to check whether and how cooperative learning may boost EFL students' grammar competence. To fulfill the aims of the research work, 40 questionnaires were given to scholars in question to probe information about their perspectives, preferences and difficulties towards working in groups during grammar classes. On the other hand, 10 other questionnaires were administered to the teachers selected to conduct this research to gain insights about the methods they usually rely on when teaching grammar to their learners .The results which have been analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively highlighted that the use of cooperative learning aided significantly to boost EFL learners' grammar competence even though their tutors neglected this strategy in teaching. In terms of general layout, the work comprises two chapters: chapter one describes the theoretical points of both grammar and cooperative learning method. The second one addresses the methodology, demonstrates the participants, data collection procedures and the data analysis besides some pedagogical remedies regarding the findings.

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List of Abbreviations

AF: Absolute Frequency

BMD: Baccalaureate-Master-Doctorate

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ESP: English for Specific Purposes

GRPQ: Guided Reciprocal Peer Questioning

LMD: Licence-Master-Doctorate

LT: Learning Together

L2: Second Language

PhD: Philosophy Doctorate

RF: Relative Frequency

STAD: Student Teams-Achievement Division

TEFL: Teaching English as a Foreign Language

TGT: Team-Games Tournament

TESL: Teaching English as a Second Language.

USA: United States of America

General Introduction

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

English is spoken nowadays around the globe and has wider dispersion than any other language; it becomes really hard to thrive in this world without knowing this language. For this reason, its teaching is viewed as one of the rapid processes in this increasingly changing world. In fact, EFL learners are daily confronted with manifold complicating factors along their learning process ranging between the feeling of contentment and motivation in some situations involving speaking English in oral production courses or composing in written production courses, and being forced to deal with complex aspects of language, in which they lose the sense of pleasure in an educational setting where English is taught. Consequently, EFL students may still show some difficulties in grammar for instance where they feel distracted with many details about articles, tenses and prepositions.

Grammar which has been and still is a subject of hot discussions among investigators, is the core of every language and the system of regular patterns which make up a language. It is this system that allows language students to create an infinite number of sentences and make sense of what they are learning. Although, tutors fill in their EFL scholars' tiny heads with a large repertoire of grammar rules and distinct lexical items besides some practice sessions in which they are asked to overcome different activities related to grammar in order to guarantee that their communicative competence is being enhanced. They are still faced time to time with hardness in solving the problems previously stated.

In the light of such striking reality, the field of educational psychology strives hard to comprehend the complexity of the educational process by placing its interest first on teachers since they constitute the power of authority in an educational setting. Students' poor achievements and the failure of an educational system are generally related to the quality of education instructors provide. To reach effective language teaching, tutors must possess a profound knowledge in grammar, skills

and the new instructional approaches and methods. By doing so, they will update to the new challenges that face education nowadays on a one hand and discover some practical solutions to the problems faced by EFL learners in the other hand. Accordingly, cooperative learning method has been suggested as an alternative solution to many educational problems in a large number of works.

The main premise of this approach based on the idea that scholars benefit from each other when they join their efforts both academically and socially. This latter helps in making more focus on students than on teachers. As a result, scholars will be active agents in the learning process in lieu of passive recipients that absorb linguistic form of a language. It is claimed that cooperative learning is an effective teaching method, appropriate for every subject area and every learner age. The reason why higher academic outcomes, effective development and social skills are attained when this method is being applied in the educational situations.

Although, the implementation of cooperative learning method to classroom teaching finds its roots years ago in some countries involving USA, and it is now applied in almost all school content areas, and increasingly in college and university contexts all over the world (Johnson and Johnson, 1989; Kessler, 1992). Little attention is given to it in some other countries among them the Algerian university. EFL teachers in Tlemcen university still find a difficulty in incorporating this method when they instruct grammar to their learners, though some of them think to prepare themselves to meet the professional issues of today's dynamic education by changing the traditional educational process to a useful and exciting one involving for instance, visual aids and sharing their teaching experiences with each other.

Beyond all these this study was suggested to check whether and how cooperative learning may boost EFL students' grammar competence, although they sometimes complain of the confusion of the English grammar rules. Thus, the general enquiry of this study aims at highlighting the following objectives:

↳ Providing the reader with the main aspects of grammar and cooperative learning.

↳ Describing to instructors the positive effects of cooperative learning in EFL classrooms in terms of students' social and academic outcomes.

↳ Attempting to encourage tutors in applying this method in their classes by focusing on the main positive points this method has in boosting EFL students' grammar competence.

Thus, the examiner endeavors to find an answer to the following general question:

☞ What effects does well-structured cooperative learning have in enhancing LMD learners of English to learn grammar?

With regard to this question, two other questions were empirically checked throughout the present work in a trial to obtain reliable answers. They are listed as follows:

★ Do our EFL instructors incorporate cooperative learning when they teach grammar to their learners?

★ Is cooperative learning workable in motivating EFL students to learn grammar?

The following hypotheses, hence, sprung from the following questions:

❖ The quasi-totality of tutors do not make use of cooperative learning when they instruct grammar to their EFL scholars.

❖ The application of cooperative learning leads EFL students to attain positive academic achievement and effective development in their grammar competence.

The handling of the main issues governing the present dissertation will be dealt with in two interrelated and different chapters:

Chapter one addresses the reader to the basic definitions of the concepts and approaches related to both cooperative learning and grammar involving their types and methods, it also highlights the researchers and the important results of structuring cooperation in the classroom.

Chapter two is, basically, a descriptive chapter, devoted to the analysis of the findings obtained from the different research tools. It also offers some alternative suggestions and pedagogical remedies to make the process of implementing cooperative learning in EFL classes easier in the eyes of both instructors and learners.

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1.1. Introduction

Cooperative learning is an instructional method in which learners are put into teams for the sake of reaching a one common learning aim. In some situations, practitioners may think of planning cooperative learning in their classes; they may, merely, put students sit either side-by-side at the same table, talking to each other while doing their individual works, or in a group in which only one learner does the whole work and the others mention their names on the product. These two facets, though essential, do not make cooperative learning perfect; the tutors then, are required to enlighten all what concerns this approach to make it work in EFL grammar classes.

Additionally, the present chapter will theoretically address the reader to a brief overview of the basic definitions of the concepts and approaches related to both cooperative learning and grammar, including their types and methods. It will also highlight the findings and the essential results of structuring cooperation in the classroom.

1.2. Conceptual Definition of Cooperative Learning

Cooperative learning is one of the most noticeable and fertile areas of theory, research and practice in education. It is considered as a system of effective teaching and learning techniques, rather than an approach, in which students are active participants in the process of learning through small group structures as far as they support each other to master the assigned academic content. They go through the process of debating and arguing with each other, assessing one another's current knowledge as well as filling in gaps in each other's understanding (Slavin, 1995:2).

Furthermore, the term cooperative learning has been documented to be an operative teaching strategy for both teacher and learner. As pointed out in Jacobs and McCafferly (2006): “*Cooperative learning encourages learning to take place and allow communication to foster among learners*”. That is to say, within this

instructional method, students take risks in the sense that they will verbalize their ideas even when these are not completely evolved and coherent. They will utilize the target language albeit, they are not certain whether it is grammatically right or wrong.

To sum up the foregoing, cooperative learning typifies an alternative method to the student-directed approach, which considers students as responsible and active participants in the learning process. It enables them to engage in a real communication where the message is more important than the form. As Long and Porter (1985:207-28) reveal: “*Group work enables learners to develop discourse competence rather than just linguistic competence at the sentence level*”. From this quotation, one concludes that students perform a large variety of speech functions. For instance, asking for suggestions, agreeing and disagreeing with one another, proposing and conceding, etc.

1.3. Student-Student Interaction: Basic Patterns

Extended findings on teacher-student interaction were directed in order to show how teachers should communicate with students and how this affects student’s academic and social outcomes. Whereas, it is not the only type of interaction that takes part in the classroom. In lieu there are other forms including student-student interaction patterns which have many to say about how well students learn, how they feel about school, each other as well as the teacher, and how much self-esteem they have.

Instructors can arrange different kinds of interdependence among scholars which in turn determine the way they interact with each other, despite the desired learning aim or the subject being taught is. The type of interdependence relies on what goal structure is dominating the classroom. Goal structure is viewed as the state of working cooperatively, competitively or individualistically. Learners can either work individualistically toward a target without paying attention to other students. Competitively where everyone compete with his or her classmate to see who works more. Cooperatively where students work together in teams in order to reach a one common learning goal.

1.3.1. Individualistic Classrooms

The first option that instructors have concerns planning. In such classes learners are self-dependent and are working to attain their goals which are separated from others. In other words, within this goal structure, learners are passive recipients that absorb linguistic forms of language, they have no part unless listening to the teacher attentively and doing the assigned assignments personally. Each learner takes care only of his or her own materials and achievement. Furthermore, educators believe that the success or failure of their classmates does not affect their own learning; this appears to be the reason why negative interdependence is connected with this goal structure.

1.3.2. Competitive Classrooms

In competitive classrooms, the fact of comparing one's achievement to others' working so that certain rewards can be obtained by the winner dominates the whole situation. In this context, Ames (1984, qtd. in William and Burden 1997:193) argue that: *"In competitive situations, grades and rewards are given only for right answers"*. This means that the student's fear of making mistakes would augment, thus he or she would not participate in the activities presented.

This competitive atmosphere is characterized by negative goal interdependence since learners try always to search, learn, ask and partake more than their peers do. Moreover, they benefit when their peers are depressed of knowledge and success at this time, they celebrate the deficiency of others. Significantly, students regard schools as "competitive enterprises", where either they win, i.e., they work harder to complete their tasks rapidly, or they lose simply because they do not have enough self-assurance to involve in such troubles.

1.3.3. Cooperative Classrooms

Cooperative classrooms are the ones where students are working together in small groups for the sake of achieving the common goals. They take the sense of an overall context of cooperation and peer support, i.e., establishing norms about when, how, and why we help others. In these classes, tutors strive for making each

member of the group benefits from help and support of others in order to celebrate the success of the whole group. Concurrently, each learner can identify his or her needs as well as learning goals without any fear, embarrassment, humiliation or isolation.

This goal structure is characterized mainly by students' feeling liable for their own and others' learning. This feeling of caring for others is what makes "positive interdependence" an indispensable part in these cooperative situations. Positive interdependence requires acceptance by a group that they "sink or swim together". In this respect Johnson and Johnson maintain:

In cooperative learning situations there is a positive interdependence among students' goal attainments: students perceive that they can reach their learning goals if and only if the other students in the learning group also reach their goals.

(Johnson and Johnson, 1987:6).

In closing the distinction between these three goal structures, Smith (1996:71) claims: "*The difference between cooperative, competitive and individualistic learning is based on the norm of interaction through which learners perceive each other*". That is to say, the way students exchange ideas with one another fixes the structure most used in the classroom. If learners compete with each other, the student-student interaction and classroom structure tend to be competitive. If there is no communication between learners then, the dominant structure of the classroom is the individualistic one. However, if learners are split into small groups which are united around a common goal. Classroom structure, then, obtains a cooperative atmosphere. Briefly, in order to have a very clear picture about the differences between these three goal structures, a distinction between cooperative learning environment and traditional environment is necessary.

1.4. Traditional Groups versus Cooperative Groups

At this point, some practitioners assert that they structure cooperation in their class, but the effects were not as positive as the literature demonstrates. The secret

is clearly seen in the distinguishing features between both traditional and cooperative groups. What is then the difference between the two?

Traditional classes include either student who works competitively, each one against another towards a purpose or a reward, or individualistically without worrying of other's performance. In such classes, tutors put their learners to sit and work in teams without further support or careful structure to make group work become teamwork. Basically, these two strategies are not enough to say that cooperation is being properly planned among learners. In this sense, Joliffe (2007:4) writes: *“Traditionally, primary schools have often organized pupils to sit in groups of four or six, although interaction between them may be very limited”*.

However, cooperative classes provide students with incentives to work as a team in order to reach a mutual aim. Such groups encourage learners to find solutions for special problems, which inspire them to debate, support each other, deal with heterogeneity as well as the perspective of others. In other words, cooperation helps individuals to strengthen the confidence in their abilities and motivates them to apply themselves in the learning process. The message is then clear: higher involvement in the learning process yields higher retention of the material learned. The implication is that tutors have to facilitate and coordinate the work. Whereas, learners have to do it by themselves.

Other features which distinguish cooperative and traditional classrooms are teachers' roles, interaction, evaluation and teaching activities. The instructor's role begins when students organized into small groups and started to work together, but what are the strategies to be followed in order to well- structure the process of cooperative learning? The first step, the teacher has to determine the learners' achievement goals concerning both the academic content and the cooperative skills. Secondly, he or she has to decide all about the heterogeneity, the type, and the size of cooperative groups which depend on his or her experience in using this instructional method.

Furthermore, a well-structured learning process requires from the teacher to know how the tasks and assigned materials should be distributed and explained, i.e., he or she assures that all the group members are using the materials and checks whether students are effectively grasping the lesson or the task by engaging them in a two-way communication, where the instructor asks and the learners answer. In contrast, traditional classes involve an emphasis on practices, reconsideration of knowledge, and drills with the figure of authority, i.e., the practitioner. Last but not least, within traditional learning situation scholars may feel discouraged and frustrated. Whereas, in cooperative groups they may gain higher achievement, greater enjoyment of school and larger respect for students with different backgrounds.

1.5. Elements of Cooperative Learning

As we could notice from the above literature, passive listening implies traditional lecturing. In contrast, active participation denotes cooperative learning. Cooperative method may sound familiar but, in fact the real essence of it is neither organizing learners sit side-by-side at the same table, talking to each other while doing their individual task, nor having a group of scholars in which only one of them does the whole work and the others mention their names on the product, but it is rather than this. Cooperative learning means the arrangement of students into small mixed ability learning groups in which the learner is considered as an active recipient. Whereas, the practitioner as adviser, observer, facilitator and charge agent. As a result, it is only under certain conditions that cooperative efforts will be expected to be more productive than traditional classes. Those conditions are: 1) - positive interdependence 2) - individual accountability 3) - face-to-face interaction 4) - social skills and finally 5) - group processing.

1.5.1. Positive Interdependence

The first requirement for an effectively planned cooperative lesson is described by Tinker et al. (2003) as “the heart of cooperative learning” which is referred to as “positive interdependence”. It generates the sense that each learner’s effort is required for the success of the whole group. To be cooperative, groups must entail

positive interdependence and learners have to realize that they are linked with the group members in such a way that they cannot attain their goals unless their group does and vice versa. According to Johnson et al. (1991), in cooperative learning situations, each member is responsible for both learning the assigned material and make certain that the other team members are mastering the content too.

A well-structured cooperative learning exists when learners notice that they learn from each other, sharing their resources and materials to provide mutual support, encouragement and celebrating joint success. Basically, both groups and tasks have to be planned, hence, all the group members participate and depend upon each other for the sake of the whole group's success. In the same vein, Johnson et al. posit:

To implement positive interdependence [...] students must believe that they are linked with others in a way that one cannot succeed unless the other members of the group succeed (and vice versa): that is they sink or swim together.

(Johnson et al, 1991:6).

The true conclusion that can be drawn about this element is that, *“without positive interdependence, learners sometimes fall into the trap of “hitchhiking” where they let one student did all the work for them, or of being “off task”.* (Cohen, 1994b). This means that the absence of positive interdependence leads to disincentive factor, especially when learners cooperate and the idea of sinking or swimming together can increase cooperation among them.

1.5.2. Individual Accountability/ Personal Responsibility

The second essential element of cooperative learning is labeled as “individual accountability” or simply “personal responsibility”. It delineates each learner's feeling of responsibility towards his or her own learning and the contribution of each team member to the accomplishment of the common aim. That is to say, individual accountability asserts that there are neither sleeping members nor free

riders; it is then the key to ensure that all team members are in fact strengthened by learning cooperatively.

Additionally, personal responsibility exists when the performance of students is assessed by knowing who needs more assistance, support and encouragement, providing feedback to the whole group as well as ensuring that every individual is compatible for the final outcome. In the same line of thoughts, Johnson et al. (1991:7) maintain: *“Individual accountability exists when each student’s performance is assessed and the results are given back to the group and the individual”*.

Under this logic, one can conclude that evaluating learners’ level can take the form of making them sit for an individual test and then the tutor examines randomly individuals orally by calling on one scholar to present his or her group’s work to him or her. To put it briefly, both positive interdependence and individual accountability are the only two characteristics among many others and the key-related elements of cooperative learning that are shared between almost all the exercises and models of cooperative method, i.e., the fact of forming group feedback on the basis of the sum of how much each individual reached the preset purposes is a way to grade both individuals and groups.

1.5.3. Face-to- Face Interaction

Positive interdependence results in face-to-face promotive interaction, which is characterized by individuals providing each other with assistance, efficient and effective help, exchanging needed resources such as materials and information, challenging each other’s reasoning and conclusions for the sake to promote higher quality decision making and greater insight into the problems being considered, acting in trusting and trustworthy ways being, motivated to strive for mutual benefit and maintaining a moderate level of arousal characterized by low stress and anxiety.

This information has been confirmed by Johnson et al. when they explain:

While positive interdependence in and of itself could have some effect on outcomes, it is the face-to-face promotive interaction among individuals fostered by positive interdependence that most powerfully influences efforts to achieve, carried and committed relationships, psychological adjustment and, social competence.

(Johnson et al, 1991:18-19).

Moreover, group work provides individuals with the opportunity to practice a much wider range of speech functions, in other words, it promotes interaction and verbal communication among students. Scholars communicate verbally, namely through exchanging information, explaining to each other the new academic content and its connection with the prior knowledge, agreeing and disagreeing with others ,etc. Other aspects of interaction encompass members:

- Exchanging materials
- Assessing each other's current performance to make the subsequent one better.
- Challenging one another for higher quality outcomes.
- Trusting each other, and
- Contributing to achieve the mutual goals (Johnson and Johnson, 2008:24).

To conclude, in order to obtain positive outcomes when facing learners in a cooperative work, the practitioners have to show their students the correct use of the social skills required for human communication.

1.5.4. Social Skills

The fourth important element of cooperative learning is defined as the appropriate use of interpersonal and small-group. These two skills do not magically appear when they are needed. Learners must be taught the human interaction skills needed for high quality collaboration and be motivated to use them if cooperative groups are to be effective. In this sense, Schultz counters:

Social skills should be explicitly taught to the students so that students could work among themselves, not only in terms of cooperation but also without hostility and without the teacher's authority.

(Schultz, 1999:29-37).

According to Tuan (2010:64-77) researchers have identified two sections of social skills: Group -related Skills which denote the way team members take turns, encouragement, praise each other and mediate an end to the conflicts they face, and Task-related Skills which involve paraphrasing, summarizing, answering, asking ,etc. Moreover, placing basically unskilled students in a group because of never or rarely working in teams before, lead cooperative learning to be non- constructive. For this reason, a set of clear and direct instructions on how scholars should communicate, guide the group and trust each other are necessary.

1.5.5. Group Processing

The last criterion is described as a productive assessment that focuses on student's feedback on the learning process, including the learners' reflection on what they still need to do to accomplish their objectives. It gives a sense to the situation where learners take some time to discuss about how far they advance towards their aims, how well they learn the assigned academic content and what behaviour are facilitative to hold or unhelpful to modify. Tinker et al. (2003).

In fact, the purpose of group processing is to improve and clarify the usefulness of the members in participating to the joint efforts to attain the group's purposes. Some of the keys to successful small-group processing are allowing adequate time for it to take part, providing and maintaining students' involvement in as well as reminding learners to use their cooperative skills while they process.

1.5. Theories Underlying Cooperative Learning

Cooperative learning is viewed to be underlined from various theories; each one highlights the evidence for the effectiveness of using cooperative method. These solid theories encompass the behavioural learning theory, the cognitive development theory, the social interdependence theory, Bandura's sociocognitive

theory, and finally the generative learning theory.

1.6.1. The Behavioural Learning Theory

This kind of theory is more probably assumed to help scholars to learn, because behavioural theory has always highlighted the importance of extrinsic motivation to the learning process, which leads individuals to aid each other and do more efforts. The fact that students are much more ready to interact with each other than with their instructors creates a permissive climate, increases the quantity of talk and gives birth to what we call cooperative learning. Cooperative method includes a larger number of principles; one of them is the idea of rewarding learners because tutors are supposed to give extra grades to the members of the group whom reach the assigned academic goal. Additionally, even among the group itself scholars feel accountable for their teammates' learning since they try to reinforce and motivate them positively.

1.6.2. The Cognitive Development Theory

Cognitive theory refers to the meaning built through actively partaking in the learning process. According to Cohen et al. (2004:168): *“The cognitive theory views learning as a process of constructing knowledge through cognitive processes like reflective abstraction, recognition and so on”*. There are two types of building this knowledge, either according to the work of the Swiss child psychologist Jean Piaget, or the Russian developmental psychologist s' work: Lev Vygotsky.

1.6.2.1. The Piagetian Perspectives

Piaget suggested that cognitive development leads to learning. For him, students are not an empty container to be filled with facts, but they have to be active participants in the learning process, that is to say, Piaget gives the learner an active role rather than a passive one. Additionally, the fact that students face a new skill or information that contradicts their prior knowledge is termed by Piaget as “cognitive conflicts”. This significantly, influences what happens in collaborative groups. During cooperative discussions, learners realize that their classmates have different

points of view then, they would compare their old knowledge and the one they are facing in exchanging situations for the sake of solving the conflict at first and construct new knowledge based on cognitive processes at the second step.

The Piagetian perspectives fix also the capability of instructors to assess the learners' present cognitive level, strengths and weaknesses by allowing them to experiment on their own rather than listening to the teacher's lecture, i.e. scholars should have chances to communicate with one another, argue and debate issues in addition to the different materials, situations and occasions provided by their practitioners in order to permit them to discover the new learning.

1.6.2.2. The Vygotskian Perspectives

As opposed to Piagetian point of view which states that cognitive development theory results in learning, Lev Vygotsky's work has been also implicated to clarify cooperative learning's academic effects. Vygotsky claimed in his theory that the fact of learning with peers or in small groups is considered as a real source for the students to get knowledge, in other words, learners will be able to practice a wide range of speech functions such as agreeing, explaining, proposing ,etc.

One of the important key elements of Vygotsky's theory is his emphasis on the social nature of learning. According to him, the way of dealing with tasks demands from students to communicate with more competent classmates. This communication allows them to learn the new information and skills available in the zone of proximal development which, in turn, denotes the discrepancy between the student's actual development level, i.e., independent achievement and his or her potential level, i.e., achievement with help from a more competent partner.

Since the principles of cooperative learning require from the individuals to be active participants in the learning process rather than passively receiving the teachers' instructions, cooperative learning is, then, in need of cognitive learning theory.

1.6.3. The Social Interdependence Theory

Social interdependence theory or what is termed by Salvin et al. (2003) as “Social Cohesion Theory” highlights learning in social contexts. This theory began with Koffka and his followers involving Lewin (1935) when they stated that interdependence exists where the common learning aim unifies members in one group. Later, Morton Deutch (1962) the graduate learner of Lewin went further to propose that interdependence can either be positive, when students help each other, carrying about the group and its members ,i.e., cooperating together, or negative as they compete against each other to see who is the winner.

1.6.4. Bandura’s Sociocognitive Learning Theory

The sociocognitive learning theory of Bandura (1971) is also used to interpret how learners’ academic outcomes are positively affected by cooperation. It focuses on the importance of observing and modeling the behaviours, attitudes and emotional reactions of others. The process of observational learning includes three steps: the first one is attention to a specific behaviour. For instance: distinctiveness, complexity, sensory capacities, etc. Retention is the second stage of the main aspects of the behaviour, which encompasses symbolic coding, cognitive organization, etc. However, the last step is motor production of the same behaviour. This latter, includes physical capabilities, motivation, self reinforcement, etc.

1.6.5. The Generative Learning Theory

The premise of generative learning theory shed light on the students’ carefulness of each other. It speaks about learners who explain to their partners using their own words, showing that through this way, lower-ability peers benefit from competent scholars, the fact that leads to the well mastery of language. Under this logic, Stevens writes:

This theoretical view explains the importance of giving elaborative explanations during cooperative learning to promote learning for not only the student who receives the explanation, but also for the student who gives the explanation.

(Stevens, 2008:189).

To sum up the foregoing, a well-planned cooperative learning requires from teachers to ensure that all the group members are engaging in dialogues, at the same time are providing elaborative explanations heedless their level.

1.6. Types of Cooperative Learning

Being new learners in a college or facing a difficult class may cause to scholars feelings of hindrance and discouragement. To resolve this issue that effects the classroom, tutors may think of creating a classroom in which many learners acquire a sense of comfortableness, powerful and supportability in their learning. In such a way, instructors attempt to structure cooperative groups. A cooperative group may be one of the following three kinds: formal, informal or base group.

1.7.1. Formal Cooperative Learning Groups

Formal cooperative groups can be viewed as the opportunity for groups to work together and for students to interact with each other. Structuring groups formally as Macpherson (2007:10) says: “[...] *may last for several minutes to several class sessions to complete a specific task or assignment such as doing a set of problems, completing a unit of work [...]*”. Formal groups consist of fixed members and characterize by an important aspect of heterogeneity of students within the small groups, that is to say, a diversity of academic and social skills, personalities, races and gender.

In formal cooperative learning groups, learners are active participants as far as they aid each other to learn the assigned academic content. They also go through a process of interaction since they discuss and argue with each other, evaluate and ensure each other’s knowledge and understanding. Moreover, scholars within this instructional type of cooperative learning will be more responsible for their own learning as well as their partners’ learning.

To conclude, Johnson et al. (1991) maintain that the teachers’ role in planning formal cooperative learning groups lies in:

- Providing students with the necessary instructions
- Splitting students into groups
- Explaining the assigned task

- Controlling how each group is functioning
- Teaching the needed social skills
- Providing feedback to students about themselves and the whole group.
- Evaluating students' progress using a criterion-referenced test.

1.7.2. Informal Cooperative Learning Groups

In contrast to the formal cooperative learning groups which involves the active liaison of learners with their peers rather than inactively receive the lecturers' instructions. The spirit of informal cooperative learning groups includes randomly choosing a student to sit with his or her peer on the right or left. This action is termed by Rossetti et al. (1998:67-76) as "the turn to your neighbour".

Members of informal cooperative learning groups are well-meant for directing scholars' attention to the assigned material and dealing with it only one session. Although, within this type of cooperative learning, students lack the sense of creativity, responsibility, and interaction. Informal groups are workable when they are used during lectures in order to break the routine and help learners concentrating rather than drifting away after some minutes.

1.7.3. Base Cooperative Learning Groups

Base groups are influential in creating amity that last longer since they are built upon communication among students with different backgrounds. Under this perspective, Macpherson (2007: 10) defines it as "[...] *long term cooperative learning groups with stable membership*".

Basic cooperative learning groups appear to be the most appropriate type for complex and more difficult subject matters that last for a semester or even more in large number classes. They aid increase the quality and quantity of each learner's performance as well as provide them with assistance and encouragement.

In order to correctly structure the base groups, some basic elements should be carefully taken into consideration. When planning base groups, tutors are required to have a big picture of each learner's current level and assure that base groups are a

bit larger than the formal ones, learners on their part need to know the tasks to deal with before they meet regularly in their free time inside and outside the school

1.7. The Selected Cooperative Learning Methods

There are several methods which could be adopted from cooperative learning to be applied in English as a foreign language classroom to enhance students to work together and aid each other to learn. Johnson et al. add:

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.

(Johnson et al, 2003:3).

Each cooperative method has its own characteristics and applicability to distinct curriculum areas. The following methods which have been successfully applied in the classroom are the main methods of cooperative learning in lieu, they represent only some ways in which cooperative learning can be planned. The choice, in fact, was based on the most effective methods to be used for the sake to confirm students' performance according to the various studies on cooperative learning methods and their pertinence to teaching languages.

1.8.1 Jigsaw

Jigsaw constitutes one of the earliest models of cooperative learning which was evolved by Eliot Aronson (1971). According to Stevens (2008: 190): "***Jigsaw is best used with students in elementary school through college [...]***". It is said that this strategy is suited when the learning of narrative content is wanted rather than the learning of skills, in other words, each scholar' participation is an important piece to the learning of the whole group and; therefore, to the whole class.

In the jigsaw method, each group includes four learners in addition to an expert in the subject area. The experts have first to assemble and discuss what

content to teach to other partakers and in what way it should be taught; afterward, they return to their initial groups to teach their partners. Stevens (2008: 187-193) in fact, jigsaw model was proved its efficacy since it was used by a number of researchers in their classroom with different age students and subject areas. Such efficacy was shown through the reducibility of the teachers' dominance of the learning of students and the feeling of comfortableness that learners sense within jigsaw method.

According to Mengduo and Xiaoling (2010: 113-125), a set of transformations have been applied to jigsaw method and it was not the final version of working in groups, There was other suggestions of jigsaw 34 by Slavin (1978) which focused the significance of learners' background knowledge that they have about the assignment, and jigsaw 34 by Holliday (2002) which added evaluating students' performance after reexamining the knowledge gained from the cooperative work.

1.8.2. Student Teams- Achievement Divisions (STAD)

STAD is a cooperative learning strategy which serve as a strong enticement to enhance the participants' motivation and to prepare them for a test when the tutor is about to finish an instructional unit. This method includes some important constituents such as teams, quizzes, class participation, etc. In this regard Stevens explains:

STAD is a cooperative learning method developed by Robert Slavin that is used in learning factual content (e.g., vocabulary, social studies or science information) as well as discrete skills (e.g., spelling, math computation, or language mechanics skills) for student in second through twelfth grade.

(Stevens, 2008:191).

Even in STAD groups are made of four learners, within this model the teacher first lecture on the topic learners then, sit on a heterogeneous teams, in which they discuss the assigned material provided by the practitioner in order to prepare themselves for a quiz that fixes their improvement points which in turn influence how their performance increases. In other words, students will be recompensed if their performance encounters some criteria and if their grades are upper to those of the previous quizzes.

1.8.3. Learning Together (LT)

Learning together is the third model which is uncovered by David Johnson and Roger Johnson in the mid 1960s. It is focused on the social interdependence theory which identifies two kinds of interdependence: positive and negative with a third possibility being that no interdependence exists between people in a given situation. The explicit emphasis that learning together proves group performance is an essential element which differentiates this method from the previous one (STAD).

Since learning together model includes the five basic elements of cooperative learning which are: face-to-face interaction, positive interdependence, individual accountability, and interpersonal skills Stevens (2008:187-193). It is, then, characterized by interaction, motivation, support, etc as learners share their opinions and materials through communicating accurately and unambiguously, get to know and trust each other, care of others' learning, divide labour, strive to reach a one common learning goal as well as gain the group reward.

1.8.4. Guided Reciprocal Peer Questioning (GRPQ)

GRPQ was evolved by Alison King and selected to be used with college scholars. It includes a brief lecture of 10 to 15 minutes when it is finished, each student starts to ask a question about the content to his or her peer the later answers it and reciprocates by asking another question. In fact, research on guided reciprocal peer questioning showed great and effective results in terms of accuracy and proficiency as this method influences positively scholars' learning and aid them to grasp correctly the new knowledge. Stevens (2008:187-193).

1.8.5. Reciprocal Teaching

Reciprocal teaching was elaborated by Annamarie Palincsar as a useful activity to teach the reading comprehension skill. It is a suitable method of cooperative learning which is used for elementary and middle school students.

This model passes through some steps beginning with explicitly clarifying the comprehension techniques to learners involving summarizing, clarifying, predicting, and questioning after applying them in front of the whole class. Moreover, the assignment is distributed to learners in their regular settings. Classroom scholars discuss the assignment then, split into groups to have a group discussion where the strategies are used in the same way as their tutors did.

To conclude, within reciprocal teaching method, students are involved in more natural conversation in which they have the opportunity to use a variety of speech functions and hence to develop their discourse competence rather than their linguistic competence.

1.9. Cooperative Learning: Academic and Socio-effective Outcomes

In traditional classes, the one- way communication restrict the use of English as a means of communication between the teacher and the learner inside the classroom, as a result the practitioner represents a fountain of knowledge who spoon feeds students. To become intelligent users of the language, students do not require only the linguistic competence but also the communicative competence. One way to promote interaction between scholars is structuring formally cooperative groups.

The pertinence of cooperative goal structure in EFL classrooms lies in the fact that it allows students to have two-way communication chances for the sake to practice their target language knowledge, as it requires from them to cooperate and negotiate information for the sake of creating a social interaction.

Discussions among the groups enable students to interact orally in English as they contribute in their tasks, learning more and receiving feedback about their language proficiency. Even the mistakes done in the middle of the work by one

learner, help in creating cooperative discussions especially when being noticed by his or her classmates. Consequently, students may face during their interaction either a complex, easy or interesting input.

According to Johnson et al. (1991) and Joliffe (2007), the general aim of research conducted on the consequences of cooperative learning identified three main categories of outcomes principally: effort to achieve, interpersonal relationships, and psychological health.

1.9.1. Effort to Achieve

Before answering the question: why higher academic performance, positive attitudes as well as critical thinking are resulted from join efforts? It is essential first to understand that simply placing learners in one table does not necessarily imply the performance of a higher achievement because engaging in a cooperative situation require a useful consideration of the five basic components of cooperative learning which must be included in each group.

In many classes, the dominant fact is that of the instructor being considered as “sage on the stage”. Learners rely on their tutor in comprehending and mastering the assigned academic content since they play the role of passive recipients that absorb linguistic forms of language. However, students who had lived the cooperative experience function more correctly than whom work individualistically or competitively ,i.e., it is through using cooperative learning that scholars can perform a wide range of speech functions such as: negotiating, explaining, arguing ,etc.

Additionally, autonomy and responsibility are two metacognitive strategies which are inevitably resulted from well-planned cooperative group (Oxford, 1991), that is to say, when learners join their efforts, each one of them becomes compatible for his or her individual learning, the groups’ learning and benefits as a whole. One of the assessment symposiums in Harvard University (1990) has drawn the conclusion that working collaboratively with classmates gives birth to positive

attitudes towards the subject matter, i.e., cooperative learning is the key solution for higher level reasoning and critical thinking.

1.9.2. Interpersonal Relationships

Presently colleges welcome learners of distinct races, competencies, ages, gender, social classes, etc. No matter to what extent the classroom is multicultural, or what impressions learners get when meeting their classmates the first time. Students start linking by understanding each other's point of view as well as caring for one another's learning, this positive relationship is termed as "social-effective learning" which is considered as one of the advantages of cooperative learning.

When working in groups, learners begin to discover the real meaning of listening to, understanding and solving problems with others; they maximize their capacities to increase their academic achievement and productivity. This information is confirmed by Johnson et al. (1991:43) when they say: "***To be productive, a class of students must cohere and share a positive emotional climate***".

Thanks to social support which ensures both the assistance of learners to each other to successfully reach their aims and the development of their capacities in order to deal correctly with frustrating and stressful situations. Additionally, through working in groups egocentrism is lost, wider perspectives are taken and interaction among learners is proved.

In brief, cooperative learning does not influence only student-student linking but also teacher-student relationship. It allows instructors to communicate with small groups rather than addressing the whole class, the practitioner, then, has more chances to learn the learners' names and create an intimate atmosphere that can last even after the class time.

1.9.3. Psychological Health

According to different studies and investigations which were conducted to fix cooperative learning's benefits, psychological health was resulted. Cooperation

results in successful academic achievement, positive social relationships, emotional maturity, self-esteem, etc since it involves caring about each other's feelings, opinions and learning which in turn leads to strive more to accomplish the shared goals. (Johnson and Johnson, 1987).

With regard to self-esteem, which is a significant aspect of psychological health and a positive result obtained from join efforts, learners go through a process of personnel reliance and appropriation, the fact of doing so guide the students to revise their previous knowledge, acquire and search for information .So, they will become active actors in the learning process and they will appeal to cognitive and motivational strategies that enable them overcome any obstacle.

Besides, intrinsic motivation has been always regarded higher in comparison to extrinsic motivation. The former comes from a mixture of the likelihood of the need of success and the requirement for success. These two facets take a great part in cooperative groups since every learner seeks to positively participate to the success of the whole group. In brief, the joint success experienced in working together to get the job done enhances social competencies, self-esteem, and general psychological health, the more psychologically healthy individuals are, the more positive they are able to work with other to achieve mutual purpose, and the more positive interpersonal relationships are, the greater psychological health of individuals involved through direct social support, shared intimacy, and expressions of caring. To confirm the above information Johnson et al. propose the following diagram:



Figure 1.1. Outcomes of Cooperation (1991:29)

1.10. Conceptual Definition of Grammar

In spite of the important role that grammar plays in the field of language teaching and learning, many language specialists have defaulted to provide this area with an appropriate picture of what grammar is, that grammar which was once at the centre of English language teaching. Consequently, giving a clear definition to the concept “grammar” is difficult to accomplish, since many grammarians gave a multiplicity of perspectives concerning the meaning of grammar. So, how has grammar been considered by researches in the field over the last few decades?

Traditionally speaking, grammar has been only associated with the analysis at the level of the sentence but recently linguists such as (Penny Ur, 1988), (Thornburg, 1999), (Harmer, 2001) consider it as a branch in the study of language that contains both morphology, which deals with the function of meaningful elements and the way in which they are differed and syntax, which is concerned with the combination of these words to form phrases, clauses and utterances. However, for other linguists like: Greenbaum et al. (2002), grammar refers just to syntax.

In addition to this, many grammarians attribute the term grammar with a set of components: phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics or meaning so, by definition they advocate the central role that grammar plays in the study of a

language. Under this perspective, Musumeci (1996:1) says: *“Language does not exist without grammar, because all languages are characterized by these components”*.

Grammar can also be viewed as a body made up of a number of parts and rules and therefore it is viewed as *“that science which treats the principles and rules of spoken and written language”*. Woods (1995:1), on this light grammar is seen as the vehicle by which language learners arrive to produce new sentences so as to express their thoughts appropriately, this is termed as “linguistic creativity”. In this regard, Wilkins states:

[...] the grammar is the means through which linguist creativity is ultimately achieved and an inadequate knowledge of the grammar would lead to a serious limitation on the capacity for communication. .

(Wilkins, 1976:66).

It follows from this definition that grammar enables the speakers and the writers to enlarge their capacities of producing utterances that they have never heard before. In this sense, grammar will undoubtedly allow them to express themselves in a more communicative way. The objective of it is then, to teach those who use the language to express their thoughts accurately and correctly, either in speaking or writing.

To put it briefly, the complexity of giving a convenient definition to the term grammar can stem from the fact that:

Grammar is not the kind of concept that can be given a ‘correct’ definition even professional grammarians cannot agree and have no prosper of even finding some kind objective facts which would push us to an agreed definition this doesn’t mean that grammar itself is vague and subjective [...] but simply that it has no natural boundaries waiting to be discovered.

(Purpura, 2004:42).

In this regard, how grammar has been explained and how it is solely regarded differ from a language expert to another.

1.11. The Role of Grammar in English Language Teaching and Learning

Language is involved with almost everything we do as human beings, we cannot live without it and grammar is the fundamental organizing principle of that language, in other words, grammar provides a basis for learning a language, after studying it we will become more alert to the strength, flexibility and creativity of the language and thus be in the right position to use it and evaluate others' use of it. A look at the various use of grammar in English language learning and teaching may clearly picture such perspectives.

In the past *“grammar was used to mean the analysis of a language system, and the study of grammar was [...] thought to be sufficient for learners to actually acquire another language”*. Rutherford (1988, qtd. in Purpura 2004:1). As a result, grammar was an important part of written or spoken English. According to many language specialists, aiding learners enlarge their knowledge of grammar will undoubtedly allow them to express themselves in a more communicative way. The guiders of such view say that grammar guarantees to students the ability to generate an infinite number of sentences and utterances with a limited number of words and sounds. Under this logic, Thornbury (1999:15) adds: *“Grammar [...] provides the learner with the means to generate a potentially enormous number of original sentences”*.

Furthermore, the role of grammar is unlimited to the level of sentence but it influences other longer discourses, this information is argued by Widodo (2006:122-141), who stresses that *“The roles of grammar go beyond the sentence and utterance level to affect the four skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing”*. In listening and reading, we cannot grasp the intended information or make the interrelationship between the parts of the discourse if we have not had a basis of grammatical knowledge. In speaking and writing, producing

understandable meaningful sentences, utterances and connected them depend to a large extent on grammar.

Last but not least, learning a language is not just a matter of learning how to fit linguistic forms together to form correct sentences, but it is rather than this, it involves learning to use such forms for the sake to perform communicative acts of one kind or another. A learner cannot be said to know the language until he or she can manipulate the formal devices for the purpose of conveying messages in real - life situations, that is to say, he or she has to know what variety of language to use in a particular situation and how to vary the style according to whom he or she is addressing.

1.12. Presenting and Explaining Grammar in the Classroom

Regardless the disparity of thoughts concerning grammar and its position in foreign language learning is, it is what is being thought as grammar and how it is being pictured which we should question at first place. In thinking about teaching grammar, there are three areas we have to consider: grammar as rules, form and resource.

1.12.1. Grammar as Rules

Generally speaking, learning a foreign language implies learning its grammatical system embodied in the form of rules. Such rules constitute the cornerstone on which learners may “[...] *build their knowledge, which will act as the generative base for them to express their ideas*” Woods (1995:15). It follows from this definition that the concept of grammar is concerned with the rules which define how forms are composed, used and transferred to actual use, in other words, grammatical rules can constitute the sound ground on which language students depend to generate an infinite number of utterances and at the same time facilitate the transfer of knowledge from the instructor to the student.

1.12.2. Grammar as a Form

Students are made up of words, the arrangement of these words into grammatical categories is called according to Williams (2005:53) “form” and “[...] *Form is synonymous with structure*”. Hubbard et al. (1991:327). In spite of the appearance of many grammar methods, teaching form has always been dominant and valued by many researchers since it enables learners to achieve a level of accuracy.

Teachers can, in fact, make sense of what is said by their learners even if there are mistakes in the form used. As far as simple information is concerned, this can be the case: the learner saying “I goed to the park” will have communicated information successfully albeit grammatically incorrectly. One way to solve this issue is by correcting the learners’ mistake by saying: “I went to the park” instead of “I goed to the park” in addition to the use of activities that ensure the correct production of the form which can constitute an ideal model to achieve such target. These activities should bear a respect to the following criteria: sufficient thinking time and the suitable feedback; that is an account of how accurate students are, familiarity with the structure, attention to form , Thurnbury (1999:92).

Because it has been confirmed that “*a focus on grammatical form alone may not be enough in L2 educational contexts to determine if L2 learners have sufficiently acquired a structure to communicate effectively*”. Purpura (2004:13). Consequently, the practitioner has to consider the teaching of grammatical meaning for the sake of helping scholars to put the emphasis on what to do with language rather than on how language is arranged.

1.12.3. Grammar as a Meaning Resource

Language exists in reality as sentences not as individual words, that is to say, putting words together have specific intended meaning in certain situations. This function words contain, has a direct link to communication, i.e., there is a relation between identifying grammatical function and interaction because what is interacted is usually the intended signification of the speaker which depends on the context.

For this reason, the teaching of grammar as a meaning resource is always presented in the field of language teaching and learning since it is considered as *“the ability to process language speedily and easily”*, Thornbury (1999:93). Grammar as a meaning resource can be achieved if the tutor succeeds at diverting students’ attention away from form by providing them with a set of activities including ‘if-clause’ form which expresses different meaning as in:

- ☞ **If** you **suffer** from headache, **take** medicaments. (It expresses advice).
- ☞ **If** David **did not come**, you **must ring** me. (It explains obligation).

On the light of what has been said so far, *“The purpose of any kind of grammar teaching should not seize to focus on precision at applying the system, and atomization of the system”* Siyyari (2005:23). In this sense, grammar lessons have meant learning the rules in certain circumstances, practicing the form in others, and helping students to convey meaning in other areas.

1.13. Direct and Indirect Presentation of Grammar in the Language Classroom

Grammar has always been a source of discussions in the teaching of foreign languages and its teaching has been traditionally fixed by prevailing methodologies and the teaching of types and approaches namely: descriptive and prescriptive rules, explicit and implicit knowledge of grammar, in addition to deductive and inductive approaches.

1.13.1. Descriptive versus Prescriptive Rules

In any language, there are two types of rules which are considered differently. The first kind of rules focuses on describing the language as it is used, not saying how it should be utilized. In this sense, it regulates the way words are put together and describes how words combination can be possible or impossible; these rules are known as “descriptive rules”. In the same line of thoughts Swan (2005a) writes: *“Descriptive rules are simply accounts of linguistic regularities”*. In other words, descriptive rules which are agreed among linguists permit people to judge if a sentence can be said or unsaid in a language. For instance, the descriptive rules of English allow us to say that a sentence as; he went out of shop speedy is possible.

However, an utterance such as; went shop out he of speedy is not.

In contrast to descriptive rules, prescriptive rules denote the structure of a language as certain people think it should be used, i.e., they categorize certain language uses as acceptable or unacceptable according to the standard form of a language. For example, it is not preferred by speakers of standard English to split an infinitive like in: “to actually feel”. (Swan, 2005b:66) defines prescriptive rules as *“linguistics regulation rules which individuals devise in the belief that their languages need regulating, tiding up or protecting against change”*. They are then put and used by certain people in specific situations as in formal writings.

1.13.2. Explicit versus Implicit Knowledge of Grammar

Broadly speaking, an explicit approach to teaching grammar insists upon the value of deliberate study of a grammar rule, either by deductive analysis or inductive analogy in order to organise linguistic elements efficiently and accurately in other words, explicit grammar is a cognitive approach which helps students gain a conscious understanding of language rules. It starts with an explanation of those rules for example, it explains when to use have and has and provides sample sentences that illustrate how to conjugate the verb. Under this logic (Widodo, 2006:125) explains: *“Explicit grammar is the conscious knowledge that has the advantages of facilitating input and the benefit of monitoring the output”*. It requires the use of grammatical terminology so that, grammar can be pointed in a clear way.

Implicit approach, by contrast is one which suggests that learners should be exposed to grammatical structures in a meaningful and comprehensible context in order that they acquire as naturally as possible the grammar of the target language. When teaching English as a second language (TESL), the teacher may present the present tense of have implicitly by reading a story aloud, she or he may then lead to a discussion about the story. This approach then focuses on communication more than perfection. If a learner says: ‘Sally have a dog’, the tutor may respond ‘Sally has a very big dog’. In brief, explicit grammar is the one that spells out the rules and

explanations for language. Whereas, implicit grammar is the grammar we discover through experience in the way we learn our native tongue.

1.13.3. Deductive versus Inductive Approach

Deductive approach represents a more traditional approach of teaching in which the tutor states concepts or rules and elicits a number of examples in which the rule is applied and then the learners are asked to do a number of exercises through which they learn the use of the structure. While, inductive approach is in fact an experimental approach and a more recent way of teaching language grammar, whereby

[...] Students are presented with examples of the target language and led to discover its underlying organizational principles in order to be able to formulate a formal set of rules and prescriptions.

(Purpura ,2004:2).

With this approach which is also known as “the bottom up approach”, the learners make generalizations from the manipulation of examples, i.e. inductive approach depends on the students’ unconscious ability to devise an understanding of a rule they have never learnt before and it does not rely on translation for the sake to make the scholar thinks directly in the target language.

Moreover, the deductive approach has many benefits: it offers the student a clear explanation of the grammatical structure and its use, it speeds up the learning process, as well as it saves time since the rules can be quickly explained by the teacher as a result, more time is devoted for practice and application. On the other hand, inductive approach gives the opportunity to learners to discover the rules by themselves as the students within this method lays in understanding the usage of the grammatical structure in a provided context. In this way, and according to many language specialists, learners become more involved in the process of evolving the language and thus, develop their own learning strategies because *“induction or learning through experience, is seen as the ‘natural’ route to learning [...]*

language data (or input) is best processed inductively and without recourse to translation”, (Thornbury, 1999:49)

Another benefit of the inductive approach while learning grammar is that *“Students can focus on the use of the language without being held back by grammatical terminology and rules that can inhibit fluency”*. (Goner et al. 1995:129) that is to say, inductive approach is considered as a voyage of discovery into the patterns of language rather than the learning of prescriptive rules as a result, it develops the power of thinking, reasoning and reflection.

Despite the fact that many advantages have resulted from the use of both deductive and inductive approaches, other disadvantages have extracted from these two methods. For example, within deductive approach *“Learners might feel that they are getting too many lectures from the teacher which bear little relationships to their needs to be able to use the language”*. (Thornbury, 1999:54-55). In this sense, it might constitute a demotivating force among learners. The teacher is then required to be aware of the benefits and inconvenient of both deductive and inductive approaches in order to vary and organize his or her lessons as well as keep his or her learners motivating and interesting.

1.14. Models and Examples of Teaching and Learning Grammar Using Cooperative Groups

As cooperative learning method is centered in initiating learners into self-assessment as well as self- reliance the teacher, then, is no more a transmitter of knowledge whose unique duty is to fill in empty container, but rather is assigned the role of a helpful or facilitator who engages learners into tasks. When using cooperative learning for teaching grammar, students are encouraged to work out exercises by themselves and thus, they become less dependent on the instructor as the only source of knowledge. In line with this token, (Al Moutawa and Kailani, 1989:75) posit: *“One feature of communicative approach of teaching grammar is its learner-centered characteristic; group and pair work are examples to achieve this quality”*.

There are a wide range of techniques which are stated before and used when using cooperative learning for language teaching among them: Jigsaw, Student Teams-Achievement Divisions (STAD), Team- Games Tournament (TGT), learning together ,etc. According to their traits, the first is mainly used in teaching reading and vocabulary. However, the three others, (STAD, TGT, and LT) can be applied in teaching grammar. Being fixed on STAD and TGT, they are similar on individual accountability, equal goals and opportunities of success. Whereas, they differ in that TGT learners play academic games to demonstrate their individual mastery of the subject matter and STAD emphasis on individual quizzes to get the group grade. In brief, the choice of a method of cooperative learning depends on the tutors' objectives and the students' level. The following is an instance of an exercise concerning the use of distinct English tenses. This activity can be done through utilizing TGT model of cooperative learning as the following:

Learners separate into heterogeneous teams of three or four members. To each team, the practitioner may give six to eight utterances supported by pictures. He or she requires the group to work together in order to unit these sentences into one paragraph where the correct tense is used. In each time, the learners of the same group use one utterance appropriately, a point is given to the whole group. Finally, if the tenses are used properly by all students and the paragraph made is understandable, extra points are given to the whole team members. The tutor may, then choose any learner of the team spontaneously to ask if there is any irrelevant utterance or the reason behind choosing certain tense in order to ensure the contribution and collaboration between the group members. The stories of the teams are read to the whole class to select among them the most important and coherent one.

STAD model is another kind of activities in which the instructor decides about the rule to be practiced like the application of the interrogative structure but the content is chosen by the student is also known according to Penny Ur (1980:30) as “semi controlled group work”. In such exercise, the students of the team plan conversations where each individual plays a role of a real person in the real life. For

instance, one is a performer, the other is a doctor, the third is a player from other team different than the team of the first performer, the fourth and the fifth are the trainers of the two groups where the two players belong. The dialogue is planned by the team members where the focus is on the structure of interrogation and different English tenses ,i.e., present, past simple, present perfect, and past continuous. After, each learner takes individual quiz about the use of each tense and the interrogation form in their dialogue. Before one can be decided about the most talented group which will have either a reward or bonus point. The marks of the members of the same group are assumed and split according to their number to have the grade of the team.

1.15. Conclusion

This chapter was mainly concerned with clarifying the key concepts used in this work; it also sought to summarize the main aspects that instructors need to know before trying to structure cooperative learning in their classroom. So much focus was put on the pertinence of cooperative learning in EFL grammar classrooms and on its academic and socio-affective outcomes.

As it was resulted from the theoretical part of this work, putting learners in groups does not necessarily gain a cooperative relationship but an affective application of this approach needs from instructors to be experienced and have a prior knowledge of the essential points of joint efforts.

The next chapter will focus on the introduction of the different research tools that the examiner will dealt with along this research, beginning from describing the setting in which the study took place then identifying the sample population chosen for the present investigation, after analyzing the results obtained from both teachers' and learners' questionnaires, to end with proposing some suggestions to the issue the study has set out to answer.

Chapter Two: Data Analysis and Suggested Solutions

Chapter Two: Data Analysis and Suggested Solutions

Part One: Research Findings: Analysis and Discussion

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Part One: Research Findings: Analysis and Discussion**2.1. Introduction**

It is widely argued among investigators that the chapter of data analysis in a dissertation is a significant one because “*saying is one thing; doing is another thing*” Montaigne (1993, qtd. in Robson 1991). The present chapter is undertaken under this spirit that is to say, it will strive hard to arrive at a coherent analysis of the use of cooperative learning method in an EFL grammar classroom to enhance learners’ outcomes.

Research in this chapter also aims at investigating the two designed research questions that the study has set out to answer. For this reason the investigator will attempt to present the data gathered through the data analysis procedures in a detailed and comprehensive manner.

Besides, it is worth to mention that the interpretation of the results obtained from both teachers’ and learners’ questionnaires gave birth to both quantitative and qualitative data analysis and has led to partial conclusions written at the end of each research instrument, in addition to some alternative suggestions and pedagogical remedies that will be dealt with in the second part of this chapter.

2.2. A Brief Description of the English Department

As it is previously mentioned, one of the purposes of this study is to investigate to what extent cooperative learning can be effective to boost EFL learners’ grammar competence. As a result, English language is a major language that is taught at the level of the foreign languages department at Tlemcen University. Before trying to draw a brief description of this educational setting, it is a worthy point to mention that the learners’ choice of the English language as a specialty goes behind their motives, which differ from one scholar to another. One reason from many others is clearly seen in students’ average which enables them to do this specialty or not. Recently, the required average for the English language differs from one stream to another, i.e., it depends on whether scholars were following the stream of letters and philosophy, experimental sciences or letters and foreign languages.

Apparently, the foreign languages department at Tlemcen University was opened in 1988. After, in 1994 the institute of this department could encompass two split sections namely French and English. The degree obtained from this latter asked learners to study this language for four years, i.e., the classic system in order to get the licence graduation, which guides to a teaching career in the lower levels of education namely middle and secondary schools. The fourth expanding years of studying English as a major focused on the learning of the language-oriented skills: oral expression, reading comprehension, grammar and written expression in addition to other different subjects such as: civilization, educational psychology, literature, linguistics, TEFL in addition to Arabic. Learners were also required either to redact a pedagogical report in which they speak about the instructor training sessions that they had to experience or an extended essay.

By the year 2010/2011, the department of foreign languages at Tlemcen University witnessed a paramount modification which is the involvement of Spanish language in addition to the translation section. In fact, the evolvement of this department was not only resulted from the inclusion of these two sections but, another cornerstone system was added which is the BMD system, the equivalent of the LMD in French literature. What is remarkable, whether speaking about the classic system or BMD system, a great portion of focus was put on grammar, the backbone of the English as a foreign language in the teaching process, i.e., over their first years and within both systems, learners receive a satisfactory quantity of the main important grammar s' lectures accompanied with a set of activities and tasks which they were asked to solve them.

Presently in 2014/2015, the department of foreign languages has been restructured and the English section has become an independent department encompassing translation. Because this section consists of 63 fulltime practitioners and 1232 learners (graduation), a diversity of modules are offered. These modules are essentially connected with two specialties: language studies and literature and civilization. Scholars are taught to instruct the English language at all education levels and trained to use translation techniques. The diplomas obtained from the

foreign language department enable learners to fit directly into workplace and give them access to distinct master's and doctorate research projects.

2.3. Research Objectives

On what concerns teaching/learning process in general and its methods in particular, the quasi- totality of educationalists believe that language learning's objectives should be geared towards students' requirements, that is why teaching is presently built on the premise that learners should be come ready to take charge of their own learning like their instructors do in the process of education. They are required to communicate, ask and answer, search and create their own styles and strategies in problems' solving situations rather than passively absorbing the new assigned academic knowledge. Such criteria which are believed to merge and positively influence the process of education belong to one method previously mentioned is that of cooperative learning.

In the light of the already stated realities, the present work aims at displaying whether and how cooperative learning may boost EFL students' grammar competence, although they sometimes complain about the confusion of the English grammar's rules. Consequently, the main goal behind this study can be summarized in what follows:

- ↳ Informing the reader about the main aspects of cooperative learning and grammar module.
- ↳ Examining the effects of cooperative learning in the EFL classroom in terms of students' academic results.
- ↳ Demonstrating to instructors the utility of using cooperative learning for the sake to enhance EFL students' grammar competence.
- ↳ Proposing alternative remedies for both educators and teachers willing to make use of this method in their classrooms.

In order to carry out this study and reach its purposes, the examiner has used data collection methods precisely, two questionnaires for both teachers and learners piloted with a sample population from the English section at Tlemcen University.

Before attempting to highlight the term questionnaire, the researcher prefers first to picture both sample and population's concepts.

2.4. The Sample Population

A closer look at the quality of any research work does not fix only its instruments and methodology, but also the sample population chosen as well. Hence, Cohen et al. (2000:92) note that investigators *"[...] often need to be able to obtain data from a smaller group or subset of the total population in such a way that the knowledge gained is representative of the total population under study"*.

On what concerns Cohen's quotation, researchers put a great focus on the way an examiner selects the sample from the population targeted even though there is no clear cut answer to the question about the sample size. In point of fact, the investigator must follow a top-down process which means identifying the total population first then, choosing the sample at the second stage in order to guarantee its effectiveness and representativeness.

In this study, the total number of students' population is three hundred twenty-five (325) divided into six groups and the instructors' population is sixty-three. However, sampling involves the selection of ten EFL grammar university practitioners and one class of the second year which consists of fifty-six (56) EFL university learners, forty (40) of them were selected for this study.

The motives behind selecting second year learners lies in the fact that already studying together for one year at university will give learners the opportunity to undergo working in groups at least once even in other modules. Consequently, they would have a view towards it. Another advantage of already studying English for a whole year, concerns the consciousness that educators gain about the paramount role of grammar to their learning of English language.

2.4.1. Teachers' Profile

As far as the English section at Tlemcen University is concerned, the English team was composed of ten (10) instructors, four (4) of them were randomly selected however, the sixth (6) others were chosen in a non-random way because of two

motives: first, those teachers were assigned to instruct grammar for LMD2 students for this academic year, and second this research work is conducted with this sample ,i.e., second year students.

This accessible sample of instructors are female Arabic native speakers, different in respect of educational qualifications (Magister and Doctorate holders), and in terms of age which ranges from 32 to 46 and teaching experiences. They post graduated from Tlemcen University and they were specialized in distinct fields namely: English for specific purposes (ESP), teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL), translation in addition to sociolinguistics.

It is worth noting that five of the existing grammar instructors in the English department at Tlemcen University have prepared their magister and doctorate theses in TEFL, in contrast to the remaining ones; two of them were specialized in ESP, the two others in sociolinguistics, and the other one in translation.

2.4.2. Learners' Profile

Educators are said to be the base of any teaching/learning situation likewise their participation in the research study is of a paramount role. In this regard Allwright and Bailey write: "*Learners collaboration is one way of ensuring a variety of perspectives on the situation being investigated*" (1996:73). So, to reach such aim, a sample of forty (40) learners at Tlemcen University has been assigned; 15 males and 25 females rather than 56 as the group includes.

These learners who are in the age group of 20 and 23 years are all Arabic native speakers and baccalaureate holders from both scientific and literary streams. They have been learnt English as a foreign language since their first year at the middle school. This makes a total number of seven years taking into consideration their first year at Tlemcen University.

The researcher made a selection of second year EFL learners rather than first or third year students because of two reasons as it was previously mentioned: First foremost, second year scholars have already studied at least one year together, which give them an opportunity to experience cooperative learning at least once.

Consequently the problems of nervousness and shyness will be decreased. The second reason is that second year students take grammar's courses which is not the case of third year learners.

2.5. Data Collection Methods

The researcher's topic of study was primarily suggested by experiencing a feeling of dissatisfaction of using cooperative learning method by the majority of EFL practitioners in their classrooms at the level of second year EFL learners at Tlemcen University. For this reason it is worth to mention that:

A starting point for any investigation into your own teaching must be a Willingness to examine critically what you are doing. This might stem from a sense of personal dissatisfaction with what you are doing, a feeling that things could be better.

(Bowen and Marks , 1994:28).

For the sake of examining the motives behind the neglect of cooperative learning method by the quasi-totality of EFL instructors, the researcher opted for the use of a restricted number of research instruments among many others because of different factors among them: pages and time limitations, the method selected and the research approach. In the present study, the examiner has used two questionnaires directed to both poles of the sample population namely tutors and students for the sake to "*compile a more complete picture of the activity or event being describes*". Seliger and Shohamy (2000:122).

The data collection of this research has included more than one area to validate the hypotheses stated before and uncover the contextual variables, able of exerting any type of effect on the educational scene's agents, i.e., students' lacks and preferences, motivation, attitudes, practitioners' views, methods in addition to other internal factors representing real challenges to the instructors' teaching process.

2.5.1. Research Instruments and Research Design

For the purpose of ensuring the validity of the present research work and gearing its requirements, two varying research tools have been used because of the "*value of multiple perspectives in data collection and analysis*" Allwright and

Bailey (1996:73). Such variation in research instruments is well-meant to search for the reasons surrounding EFL grammar teachers for their ignorance of cooperative learning method. The data collection procedure has encompassed two questionnaires directed to learners and teachers.

In the present study, the researcher makes use of both quantitative (experimental) and qualitative (interpretive) methods. Each item of either learners' questionnaire or teachers' questionnaire was analyzed individually. That is to say, students' scores were scattered with the help of diagram representations. However, the instructors' questionnaire was interpreted by using texts in addition to a limited number of graphics. Consequently, the target of these two questionnaires is to catch the spirit of the main features of the teaching/learning situation inside EFL learners' classroom.

In a trial to clarify The term questionnaire, many investigators mention that it is a popular research instrument and a list of written questions used for collecting data which is reported from different informants. This type of research tool is used to tap into the knowledge, ideas, opinions, and experiences of teachers, students or other respondents. In this view Brown (2004, qtd. in Mackey and Gass 2005:92) describes the questionnaire as *“any written instruments that present respondents with a series of questions or statements which they are to react either by writing out their answers or selecting them among existing answers”*.

Generally speaking, the questionnaire permits the analysis of a large sample of information in a short time and with smaller degree of effort particularly if the questions are usually arranged in a very systematic way. Nuan (1992) concludes that a questionnaire can consist of only close-ended items, only open-ended items or can be a combination of both close and open- ended questions. Accordingly, the investigator should be conscious in selecting the correct words when wording the items of the questionnaire, as she should play the role of a facilitator and a helper whenever a difficulty is faced the respondents in terms' wording or questionnaires' format.

2.5.1.1. The Questionnaires' Description

Questionnaires have been selected by the examiner as a research instrument since they represent a great source of information and “[...] *are useful for collecting data from large groups of subjects*”. Seliger and Shohamy (2000:124).

They were administrated to both poles of the sample population: students and their teachers for the sake to obtain a clear image about their insights, the teaching situation and the reasons behind not using cooperative learning method by the majority of them at Tlemcen University as well.

2.5.1.1.1. Learners' Questionnaire

The present learners' questionnaire includes fourteen (14) questions, put forwards in order to help the investigator eliciting the students' appropriate data. Fourteen questions appeared to be a big number for learners' questionnaire, but in fact, “*one way by which reliability can be increased is through lengthening data collection instruments by adding more items and questions*” Seliger and Shohamy (2000:187).

For this reason, a part of the objectives of using such research tool was meant to gather self-report knowledge about:

- ★ The agents' background (age, sex, EFL learning experience).
- ★ The students' preferences, level and views towards learning English in general and grammar in particular besides the methods used for teaching this module.
- ★ Another part of the goals of using students' questionnaire was to voice the difficulties surrounding EFL grammar teachers for the neglect of cooperative learning method.

In this regard, the learners' questionnaire consists of two rubrics: the first one aims at gathering biographical information about the questioned namely their age, gender and EFL learning experience. However, the second rubric involves the following headings:

☞ Students’ reasons and insights for learning the English language in general and its grammar in particular. (Questions 1,2,3,4,5)

☞ Learners’ choices between individualistic, competitive and cooperative learning methods when learning grammar. (Question6).

☞ Scholars’ attitudes towards the frequency of use of cooperative learning by their instructors. (Question7).

☞ Participants’ strategies when working cooperatively. (Question8).

☞ Learners’ self assessment of their grammar proficiency level. (Question9).

☞ Scholars’ learning skills when working collaboratively. (Question 10).

☞ Students’ feelings and perspectives when joining their efforts. (Questions 11 and 12).

☞ Opinions of scholars’ difficulties when putting them in groups. (Question 13).

☞ Agents’ order of the three approaches: individualistic, competitive and cooperative. (Question 14).

In structuring the learners’ questionnaire the examiner made the use of four kinds of questions; close, open, mixed (semi-closed) and ranked questions.

a) Close-Ended Questions: require from the student to choose one answer or more from a limited list of choices. These questions produce mainly quantitative data.

For example: How often does your teacher ask you to work in cooperative groups?

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

The benefit of using this type of questions is to speed and facilitate the participants’ answers. By way of contrast,

b) Open- Ended Questions: are items where the investigator does not provide the respondents with a range set of answers from which to select. Rather, the participants are required to response in their own words. Questions like this produce qualitative data. An instance of this could be:

Would you please describe how did the lectures of grammar go in classroom during the past years?

.....

This kind of questions is more likely to anticipate more important and unforeseen information.

c) **Mixed Questions (Semi-Closed Questions):** denote a mixture of both close and open questions. They are effective in the sense that they allow explanation of the obtained data, as in the following question:

In this case do you find your grammar lessons useful in achieving such purposes?

a) Yes

b) No

Why?

.....

d) **Ranked Questions:** This type of questions requires from the respondents to order the answers suggested by the researcher according to their preferences visa-à-vis the subject matter. This definition is illustrated by the following:

After having been taught with the three following methods, how would you order them according to your own preference? (Use numbers).

a) Individualistic method b) Competitive method c) Cooperative Method

The four samples of questions have been taken from the learners' questionnaire involved in this study.

2.5.1.1.2. Teachers' Questionnaire

Data collection through questionnaires are said to present the first stage or an entry into research work, but *“perhaps the most important value of questionnaires is that they help the investigator to know the target audience better”* Dubin and Olshtain (1988:17). Likewise, the rationale behind the procedure of teachers' questionnaire is well-meant to identify the motives of the ignorance of cooperative learning method by the majority of EFL instructors in their classrooms particularly when teaching grammar, but the emphasis is on the research agents' own perspectives, experience, beliefs with regard to the procedures they follow.

The present questionnaire was administrated to ten (10) grammar instructors who are teaching at the English section at Tlemcen University. Teachers' questionnaire is structured to involve thirteen (13) questions split into two rubrics

similarly to students' questionnaire. The first rubric includes general information about the tutors' background so as to constitute a wider insight about their profile. It starts with a number of questions on the practitioner's university, age, degree and EFL teaching experience.

In contrast, the second rubric which involves thirteen (13) questions was classified under the following headings:

- ✓ Questions one and two invite teachers to choose between three teaching grammar methods (inductive, deductive and eclectic) and two types of (teaching namely; teacher- centered teaching or learner-directed teaching) according to their own preferences.
- ✓ Questions three and four ask instructors to assess their learners' grammar proficiency and to give their personal attitudes towards students' preferences between individualistic, competitive and cooperative learning methods.
- ✓ Question five is concerned with the tutors' innovations used for their educators in the grammar learning process.
- ✓ Question six asks about practitioners' attendance at any workshop, conference or symposium where cooperative learning was tackled.
- ✓ Question seven invites teachers to define cooperative learning process.
- ✓ Questions eight to eleven are related to the ways of structuring cooperative learning by EFL teachers namely: the number of times cooperative learning was used, the number of students used in each group, the way of setting up the groups and the language used when learners do grammar's activities.
- ✓ Questions twelve and thirteen require from practitioners to summarize the process of planning cooperative learning in their classroom in a one hand and to voice their difficulties behind its neglect in the other hand.

The present questionnaire includes three types of questions: open, closed and mixed questions.

1. Close-Ended Questions:

Example: Do you emphasize using English when students are doing grammar's activities within the same group?

a. Yes b. No **2. Open-Ended Questions:**

For instance: What innovations you usually make to engage students more in the grammar learning process?

.....

3. Mixed Questions

For example: Do you think that your students are motivated to work in grammar classes?

a. Yes b. No

If no, why?

.....

2.6. Data Analysis Methods

It is argued that data analysis chapter is of a paramount part in any research dissertation since it constitutes the foundation on which the researcher draws conclusions and suggests recommendations. For this reason the examiner tried to highlight data collection through data analysis methods in a precise and understandable way.

Additionally, the investigator mixed between both quantitative and qualitative data analysis methods since each item of either students' questionnaire or learners' questionnaire was composed of different types of questions, i.e., close, open and mixed. Such questions which have gathered various information would be interpreted either statistically or by exerting the hidden meaning from such data to be transformed into words taken the form of texts.

2.6.1. Quantitative and Qualitative Data Analysis

Quantitative data is widely acknowledged among supporters of quantitative research because of its facility to gather information and usefulness to make generalizations to other contexts. Collecting data through quantitative research is generally interpreted numerically by using statistics which involve different

procedures. In this line of thoughts, Dornyei writes *“the single most important feature of quantitative research is, naturally, that is centered around numbers”* (2007:32). The gathered quantitative data can be nominal (also named as categorical), ordinal or interval. The former denotes the inclusion of variables. For instance; race and sex. The second is the one which is resulted from ranked questions. However, the last one (interval data) refers to values in lieu of variables. An ideal example of the present quantitative data analysis in this research study is clearly seen in close-ended questions.

While the term quantitative research was highlighted by a clear agreement on its facility and usefulness among proponents *“Qualitative research is difficult to define clearly. It has no theory or paradigm that is distinctly its own [...] nor does qualitative research have a distinct set of methods or practices that are entirely its own”*. Berg (2001, qtd. in Darnyei 2007:35). Whereas, there are some features which describe the qualitative data analysis research involving:

- Its apparent nature which gives the examiner chances to gain a great amount of information and comprehend the complete situation of the research work being targeted.
- Its requirement for mere samples.
- Its emphasis on the researcher’s own insights and experiences.
- The data gathered is transformed into words, taking the form of texts.

Consequently, the interpretation of such a data provides the reader with adequate information instead of mere graphic representations and gives the respondents their freedom to express their own perspectives and experiences. An instance of this type of data analysis in the present study is: open-ended questions.

What is more, analyzing qualitative data is not an easy task, because it demands from the examiner to follow some steps beginning by transforming the respondents’ answers obtained from open-ended questions into texts, then trying to arrange their responses (their attitudes, opinions, etc) in a way that is workable to uncover the needed data. Ladico et al. (2006:301-302) mention some stages through

which the majority of researchers will follow when they interpret the qualitative data. These steps involve:

- Preparing and organizing the data
- Reviewing and explaining the data
- Coding data into categories
- Constructing descriptions of people, places, and activities.
- Building themes and testing hypotheses.
- Reporting and interpreting data.

Though, several items exist in the field. The term mixed methods research is the preferred one since it refers to:

[...] Some sort of combination of qualitative and quantitative methods within a single research project [...] Furthermore, qualitative and quantitative principles can also be combined at the data analysis stage by ‘quantifying’ or ‘qualitizing’ the data.

(Dornyei ,2007:45).

Moreover, the examiner opted for the use of mixed methods. The reason lies in the fact that the strengths of one approach fulfill the weaknesses of another, and the use of both of them is significant for a better comprehending, and determination of the present educational situation.

2.7. Analysis of the Questionnaire

At this stage, the researcher opted for the use of both learners’ and teachers’ questionnaires in order to fix the limit of the participants’ critical reflection on their own learning and teaching experience on a one hand and to discover the strategies EFL grammar tutors rely on when teaching grammar to LMD 2 students in the other hand.

The following is a treatment of the data obtained from such research tool. It is paramount to mention that each item of either students’ questionnaire or tutors’ questionnaire will be analyzed separately in a detailed way so as to synthesize the data and arrive at the results and conclusions of the present research work.

2.7.1. Learners' Questionnaire

The present section was conducted towards gathering reliable data about students' insights, attitudes and preferences. It is made of fourteen (14) questions divided into two rubrics. The first one aims at collecting biographical data about the questioned; age, gender, and EFL learning experience. Whereas, the second one invites scholars to elicit their personal information. In fact, the two rubrics serve the main concerns of the present study.

It is paramount to note that the quasi- totality of informants welcomed the idea of filling in the questionnaire, because the investigator succeeded in attracting learners' attention by stating the objectives behind this research work and aiding them whenever they face a difficulty either in items' wording or questionnaires format. Administering the questionnaire in such way is usable for gaining time.

□ **Question 1:** What are your attitudes towards learning English in general?

Learners' responses to this question reveal that more than half of the research populations hold positive attitudes towards learning English in general that is a ratio of (55%). However, fourteen (14) students namely (35%) has asserted being indifferent. The remaining fourth ones representing (10%) voted for negative attitudes. The table below exposes the results in details:

Attitudes to Learning English	AF	RF
Positive	22	55%
Indifferent	14	35%
Negative	4	10%

Table 2.1. Learners' Attitudes to Learning English

□ **Question 2:** What are your reasons for learning English?

As far as this question is concerned the investigator aimed at uncovering the participants' objectives for learning the target language. A ratio of (55%) that is 22 learners appeared amenable to learn the English language for the sake to improve their levels. On the contrary, ten (10) informants that is a percentage of (25%) have reported that the principle motive behind learning English is to use it fluently. The ratio which supported the second preposition namely: understanding spoken and written English is (15%) that is six scholars. With regard to the last suggestion:

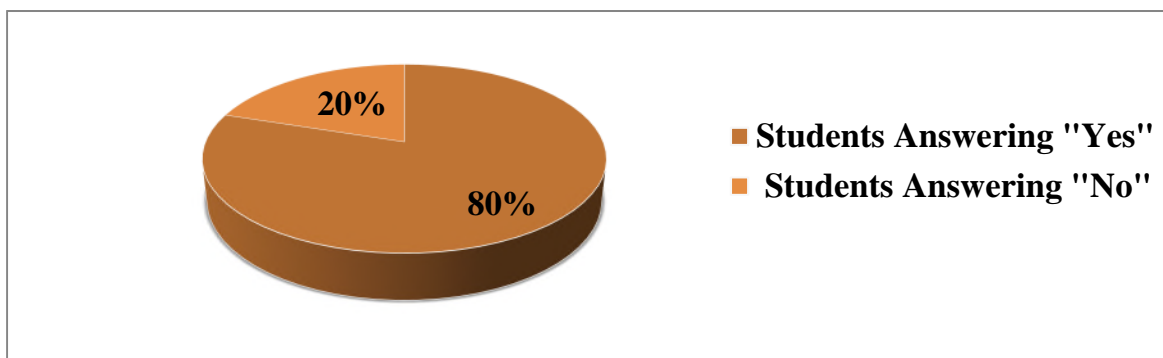
scoring well in tests and exams, two educators representing (5%) appeared to be directing to it.

Students' Reasons for Learning English	AF	RF
To improve your level in English	22	55%
To understand spoken and written English	6	15%
To score well in your tests and exams	2	5%
To use English fluently	10	25%

Table2.2. Learners' Reasons for Learning English.

□ **Question 3:** In this case, do you find your grammar lessons useful in achieving such purposes?

This question strives hard to discover students' insights towards the utility of grammar lessons. As far as the results are concerned, the majority of learners representing 80% of the present sample population appeared to hold positive attitudes since thirty-two (32) of them answered "yes", as opposed to eight (8) others namely a ratio of 20% who believe the contrary, i.e., answering by "no". The following pie- chart illustrates the above information:



Pie-Chart 2.1. The Usefulness of English Grammar to Achieve Language Purposes.

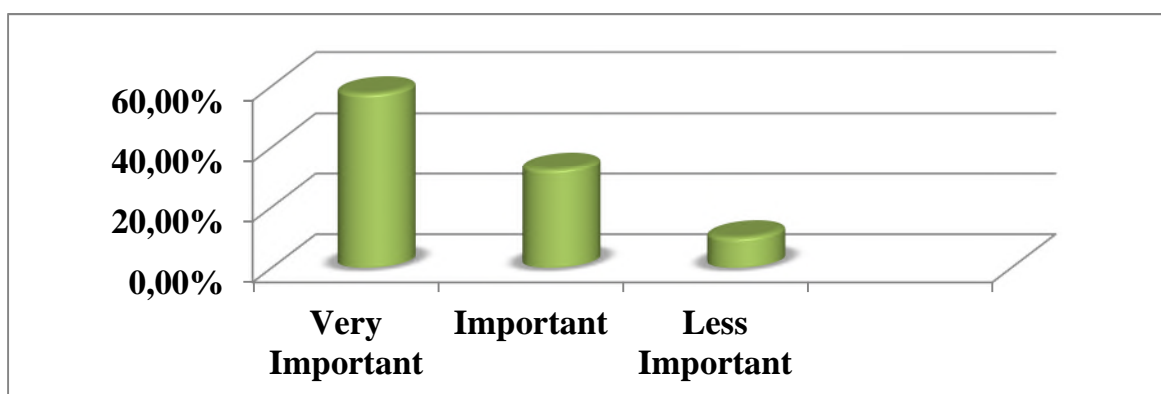
Those informants holding positive attitudes towards the utility of English grammar to achieve language purposes gave manifold motives. Some of them are listed below:

- Learning English grammar helps us to express ourselves in a more communicative way. In fact, it guarantees our ability to generate an infinite number of utterances with a limited number of words and sounds.

- Grammar rules open us the door to improve our level in English language, understand it as well as speaking it fluently.
- Grammar enables us to enlarge our capacity of producing utterances that we have never heard before.
- It is a body of empirical rules that explains and regulates the structure of our language.
- It constitutes the basis of our learning.

□ **Question 4:** Do you think learning grammar of English is very important, important, or less important?

This question was targeted towards diagnosing scholars' attitudes to learning grammar. Despite the fact that, the previous results showed great importance of learning English in general and grammar in particular. The examiner aimed at having details about this degree of importance. According to the findings obtained from this question, a big number of the research population remained agreeing in the previous expectations, that is to say, a mixture of learners who thought that grammar is of a supreme weight (20students representing 50%), with those who regarded it important (17 educators, that is a ratio of 42.5%). As opposed to 3 others (7.5%) who considered it less important. The obtained results are summarized in the following bar-graph:



Bar-Graph 2.1. Learners' Attitudes to Learning the English Grammar.

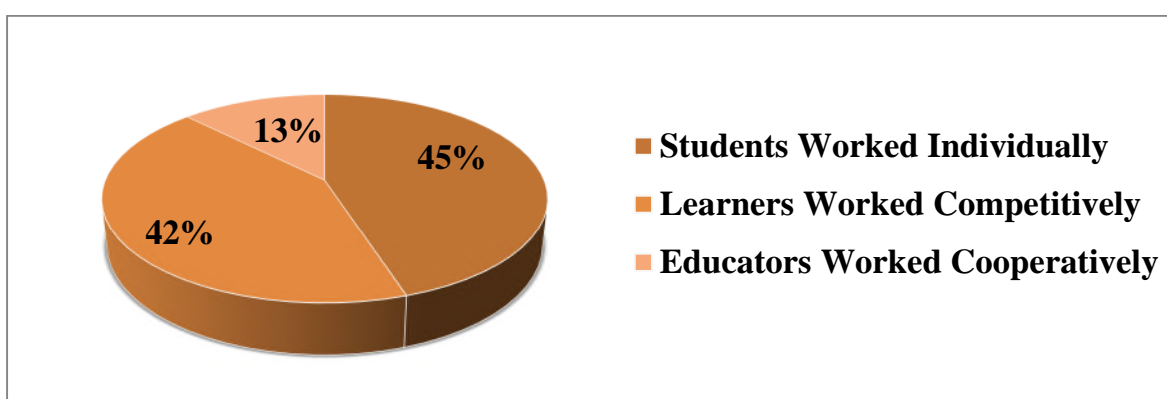
□ **Question 5:** Would you please describe how the lectures of grammar go in classroom during the past years?

This question invites students to go through a description about their grammar's lessons during the past years. The results demonstrated that the greatest ratio of

learners ,that is, (57.5%) said that lessons of grammar used to go through a process . First, by clarifying to them the grammar lessons illustrated by some instances after, requiring them to personally answer the activities given. Those activities used to be, finally, corrected either through a classroom debate where the intelligent educators contribute, or by designing each learner to correct a specific item. The other highest ratio (32.5%) that is 13 participants have asserted that grammar is a very complex skill, harder to understand it, because the majority of tutors gave a considerable interest to theory rather than practice so as, making the learning of grammar uninteresting. The fourth remaining respondents namely (10%) noticed that the process of grammar lectures go in an ordinary way without including any innovations or technology in order to engage them more in the grammar learning process.

□ **Question 6:** When learning grammar in class, do you prefer working individually, in pairs or in small group?

When being asked about whether they prefer to work individually, in pairs or in small group, seventeen (17) learners, that is, a ratio of (42.5%) contended that they like to work in pairs; the other eighteen (18) informants mainly (45%) reported that working collaboratively is the suitable method for them when learning grammar. On the other hand, a minority of 5 educators, representing (12.5%), admitted working individually. The following pie-chart summarizes the above information:



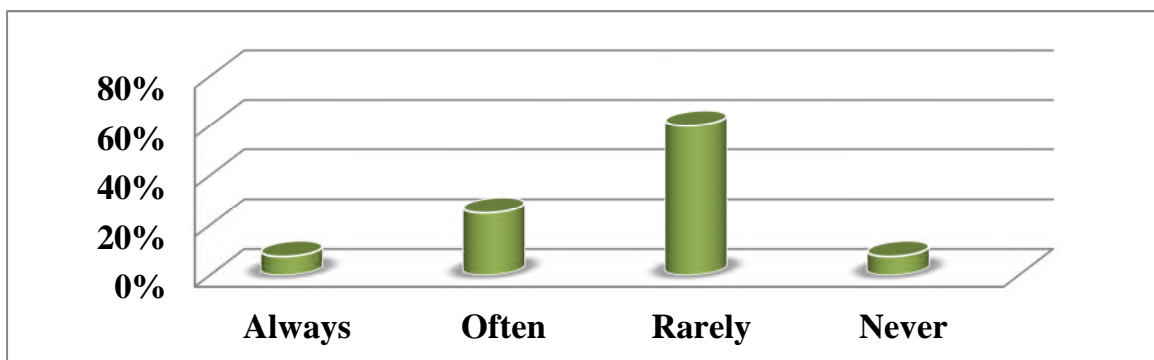
Pie-Chart 2.2. Students' Preferable Method in Relation to Grammar Module.

Those learners hold positive attitudes towards working competitively and cooperatively when learning grammar, gave myriad reasons. Some of them are listed below:

- ☞ To solve group conflicts.
- ☞ To exchange and discuss ideas.
- ☞ To gain a considerable understanding of either grammar lectures or grammar activities.
- ☞ To build relationships among students.

□ **Question 7:** How often does your teacher ask you to work in cooperative groups?

This question was asked as a trial to uncover the frequency of using cooperative group work by EFL grammar teachers. A great proportion of learners confirmed that their instructors use group work either often (with 10 learners representing 25%) or rarely (24 scholars, a ratio of 60%). However, 3 respondents, that is, (7.5%) from the whole requested educators reported that their tutors always make use of collaborative work. With regard to the item “never” other 3 students about (7.5%) stated that their teachers never apply cooperative learning method when learning grammar module. The obtained results are summarized in the following bar-graph:



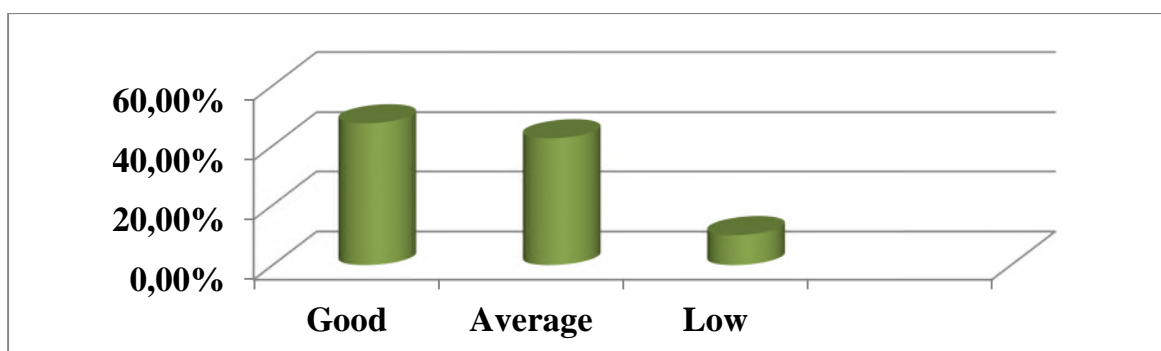
Bar-Graph 2.2. Grammar Teachers' Use of Group Work.

□ **Question 8:** when working on grammar activities in groups, what dominated most?

Students' answers to this question demonstrated that twenty-seven (27) of them representing (67.5%) from the sample population were all involved in a discussion when working in cooperative groups. By way of contrast, ten (10) learners claimed that they do not participate in explanations but, their group members explain to them. What is more, a ratio of (7.5%) that is, 3 learners argued that they explicate to their peers in the same group.

□ **Question 9:** How do you situate your grammar level after working cooperatively?

With regard to this question, nineteen (19) students representing (47.5%) rated their level to be good as far as they agreed that grammar rules are the basis for preventing them from making any usual mistakes and engaging them to expand their capacities to use sentences which they have never heard before. Consequently, those students confirmed that their level in grammar has been improved. On the other hand, seventeen (17) educators, that is, a ratio of (42.5%) pinpointed that they possess an average level. While, only four (4) informants representing (10%) mentioned that they are low achievers. This question again added validity to questions 3 and 4 since nearly the majority of students (36) who hold positive attitudes towards grammar reported that they have a level in grammar rating from average to good. The obtained results are displayed in the following bar-graph:



Bar-Graph 2.3. Learners' Self Grammar Assessment

□ **Question 10:** What skills have you learnt when working with cooperative learning?

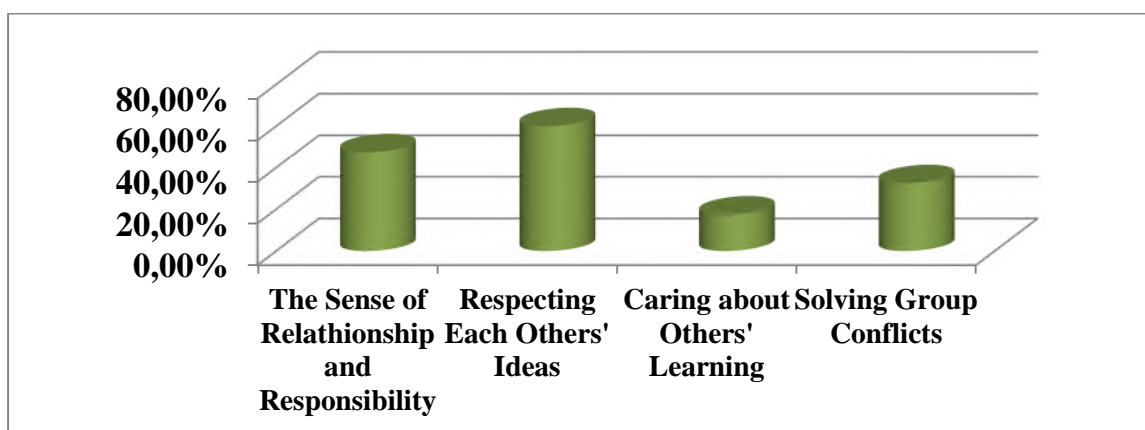
When further asked the learners about the skills which have learnt in the cooperative learning process. They specified some by ticking the suitable box (es). Details occur in the table that follows:

N° Skills	The sense of building relationship and responsibility	Respecting each others' ideas	Caring about others' learning	Solving group conflicts	Others
S1				*	
S2	*	*			
S3	*			*	

S4	*	*	*		
S5	*	*			
S6	*	*		*	
S7		*			
S8				*	
S9			*	*	
S10		*			
S11	*	*			
S12	*				
S13		*			
S14			*		
S15		*			
S16	*	*			
S17	*				
S18		*			
S19	*	*			
S20		*			
S21			*		
S22	*	*		*	
S23	*			*	
S24		*			
S25		*	*		
S26	*				
S27		*			
S28				*	
S29	*		*		
S30		*			
S31		*		*	
S32	*	*			
S33	*	*			
S34				*	
S35		*			
S36	*		*		
S37		*			
S38		*			
S39	*				
S40	*			*	
S:Student *: Learnt Skill					

Table 2.3. Learnt Skills in Cooperative Groups.

The following bar-graph displays the common learnt skills:



Bar-Graph 2.4. The Common Learnt Skills in Cooperative Groups

According to the findings concerning the common learnt skills, forty-three (43) voters affirmed that both “respecting each others’ ideas and building the sense of relationship and responsibility” are the principle skills in cooperative learning method. However, the remaining skills are partially needed.

□ **Question 11:** When you work in small groups, do you feel that you are: strongly motivated, motivated, less motivated or not motivated?

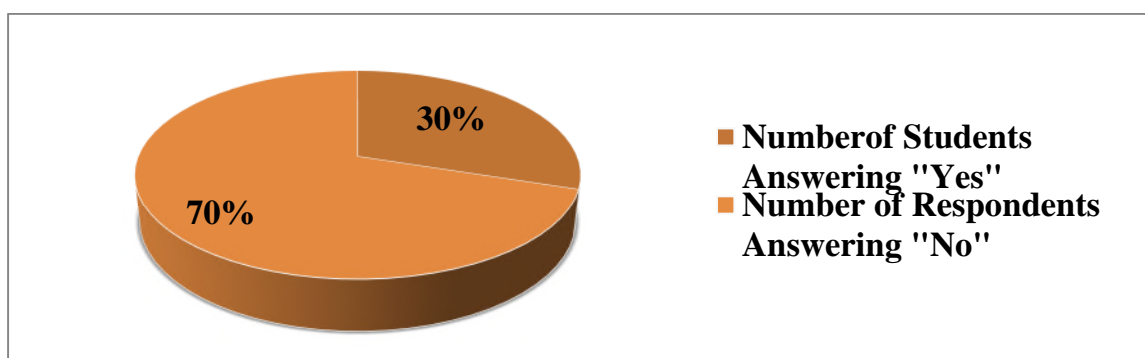
The chief concern of this question was to search for students’ feelings when they work in groups. A great number of the present research informants namely 24 students representing (60%) confirmed that they feel motivated when they work with their classmates, a proportion of (22.5 %), that is, 9 learners showed a supreme motivation resulted from working cooperatively. Whereas, the remaining participants’ answers varied from being less motivated (6 educators, a ratio of 15%) to not motivated (1 informant, that is, 2.5%).

□ **Question 12:** How would you describe the process of working cooperatively?

This question was intended to tape information about learners’ description of cooperative learning process. The answers gave birth to manifold opinions. A considerable proportion of 20 scholars (a ratio of 50%) described cooperative experience as being enjoyable. Ten others representing (25%) mentioned that the process had been exiting. However, the remaining ten others perceived it as either unexciting (6students, that is, 15%) or disturbing (4 informants, a ratio of 10%).

□ **Question 13:** Do you face difficulties when working in cooperative groups during grammar classes?

The main purpose of this question was to uncover whether or not learners faced difficulties when working in cooperative group during their grammar activities. According to the obtained results, a proportion of 28 respondents namely (70%) answered “no”. Whereas, a ratio of 30%, that is, 12 students voted for “yes” Details occur in the following pie-chart:



Pie-Chart 2.3. Learners' Attitudes towards Cooperative Learning during Grammar Lectures.

Those participants holding negative attitudes towards working in cooperative groups during grammar lectures gave manifold reasons. Some of them are the following:

- ★ Deficiencies in comprehending some classmates' explanations.
- ★ Noise due to group debate.
- ★ Disagreements among group informants.
- ★ Disregarding some learners' perspectives because of their low competence in grammar.
- ★ Egoism that may appear by higher-ability learners during group discussion.

□ **Question 14:** After having been taught with the three following approaches, how would you order them according to your own preference?

With regard to the last question in which the researcher required from the respondents to order the three approaches: (individualistic, competitive and cooperative) according to their own preference. Nineteen (19) learners representing (47.5%) from the research population, have placed cooperative learning in the first

position. While, 18 others, that is, a ratio of (45%) have put cooperative learning in the second place. The three (3) remaining ones namely (7.5%) have classified individualistic learning in the final step.

2.7.1.1. Interpretation of the Results

In fact, the learners' questionnaire gave the investigator the opportunity to interpret the roots of the central insights leading this dissertation. According to the emerging results, the quasi-totality of students appear to hold positive attitudes towards learning the English language in general and grammar lessons in particular. From the other part, the questionnaire succeeded to help a great number of informants in setting clearly their motives behind learning the target language grammar. Such motives were split between those who see the necessity of grammar in improving their levels (55%) and the other major participants who acknowledge its usefulness in using English fluently (25%), scoring well in tests and exams (5%), in addition to understanding spoken and written English (15%). What is more, the analysis also revealed that they never or rarely working in groups during their grammar lectures even though, the majority of them (35 students) prefer either working in pairs or in small groups (87.5%).

Results' interpretation demonstrated that learners have benefited from working collaboratively. This, in fact, is due to their choice for engaging themselves into group discussions rather than explaining to their peers or receiving group members' clarifications. Learners' debate is a positive sign that learning was taking place. This fact, presently, has been proved by students' description to their levels after working cooperatively. That is to say, (36) learners representing (90%) from the sample population guaranteed that their grammar competence has been increased since they rated their grammar levels from average to good.

Additionally, educators alluded to cooperative learning as an advantageous method because it allowed them to learn a set range of skills; basically the sense of building relationship among students and respecting each others' ideas whatever their gender, origin or educational background is. In fact, it is of a great value to find that the majority of students' perspectives (75%) towards describing the

process of working together were summarized into two positive adjectives namely; exiting and enjoyable. Moreover, cooperative learning method was placed in the first position of preferences though some difficulties were met when students join their efforts. Thus, on the light of what has been said so far, students' positive attitudes towards cooperative learning in enhancing them to reach higher academic outcomes and developing their grammar competence transpired and the second research hypothesis is confirmed.

2.7.1.2. Teachers' Questionnaire

The chief interest of the teachers' questionnaire which was conducted with ten (10) informants was the discovery of the methods they usually rely on when teaching grammar to LMD2 learners of English at Tlemcen University. All those respondents were females and fulltime teachers having a teaching experience ranged from 7 to 21 years and their ages varied between 32 to 46 years old.

In fact, the questionnaire was meant to be administered to grammar instructors in order to confirm whether they make use of cooperative learning in their grammar classes or not in a one hand and to check their knowledge about this method of teaching in the other hand, to conclude finally with some suggestions and pedagogical remedies that the examiner will deal with in the second part of this chapter.

Ten questionnaires were distributed to the participants in question. They involved a set of 13 questions divided into two rubrics likewise students' questionnaire. It is worthwhile to mention that during the interpretation, each question was analyzed separately and the data presented in those questions was considered both quantitatively and qualitatively, using descriptive statistics for close-ended questions and transforming the responses of open-ended questions into words taking the form of texts.

In fact, questioning instructors was of great importance because of the help that they offered in order to spot a considerable data about several areas that have a direct connection with the present research problem leading this study. To name but some; instructors' insights about the real reasons behind not using cooperative

learning method in their classes in addition to their learners' perspectives towards learning grammar cooperatively.

□ **Question 1:** As being a grammar teacher, which method do you prefer when teaching grammar?

On what regard this question, it further investigates the instructors' preferences of grammar teaching methods and more exactly inductive, deductive or eclectic grammar teaching. A ratio of (40%) namely 4 teachers showed their like of the "eclectic approach". That is, the use of this method would be explained by the differences in the nature of each grammar lecture and if the students have dealt with before or not. On the other hand, the sixth (6) remaining instructors representing (60%) preferred the deductive method because it speeds up the learning process and saves time since the rules can be quickly explained by the tutor as a result, more time is devoted for practice and application. With regard to the inductive approach, none of the tenth teachers regarded it as a useful method for teaching grammar. The obtained findings are summarized in the following table:

Teaching Methods	AF	RF
Eclectic Method	6	60%
Deductive Method	4	40%
Inductive Method	0	0%

Table 2.4. Teachers' Preferences of Grammar Teaching Methods.

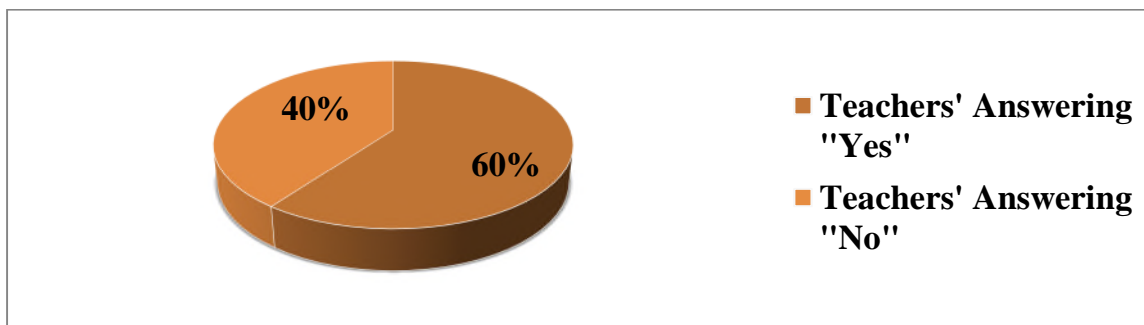
□ **Question 2:** According to you, do you prefer teacher-centered teaching or learner-directed teaching, why?

The main purpose of this question is to uncover the instructors' preferences between learner-directed teaching and teacher-centered teaching. Six (6) of them appeared to prefer learner-centered approach While, four (4) others showed their like to both of them, i.e., they move through learner-centered and teacher-directed approaches depending on the situation which means that they either directing educators and save time or engaging them in the learning process.

□ **Question 3:** Do you think that your students are motivated to work in grammar classes? Why?

According to the findings, more than half of the research population that is 6 teachers representing (60%) ensured that their students are active participants and

try always to put their touch in the process of education. Nearly the same proportion (a ratio of 40%, the equivalent of 4 practitioners) confirmed the contrary, i.e., their educators are to a great extent passive agents and will-less to learn grammar. Details occur in the pie-chart that follows:



Pie-Chart 2.4. Teachers' Attitudes towards their Students' Level during Working in Grammar Classes.

Manifold reasons of learners' passiveness were proposed in teachers' answers. Some of them are the following:

- The repetition of the previous grammar lectures during their second year, appear to be redundant for the students.
- Inadequate time assigned for grammar lessons in the students' schedule.
- Feeling confused with the English tenses.

□ **Question 4:** In your opinion, do students prefer working individualistically, competitively, or cooperatively? Why?

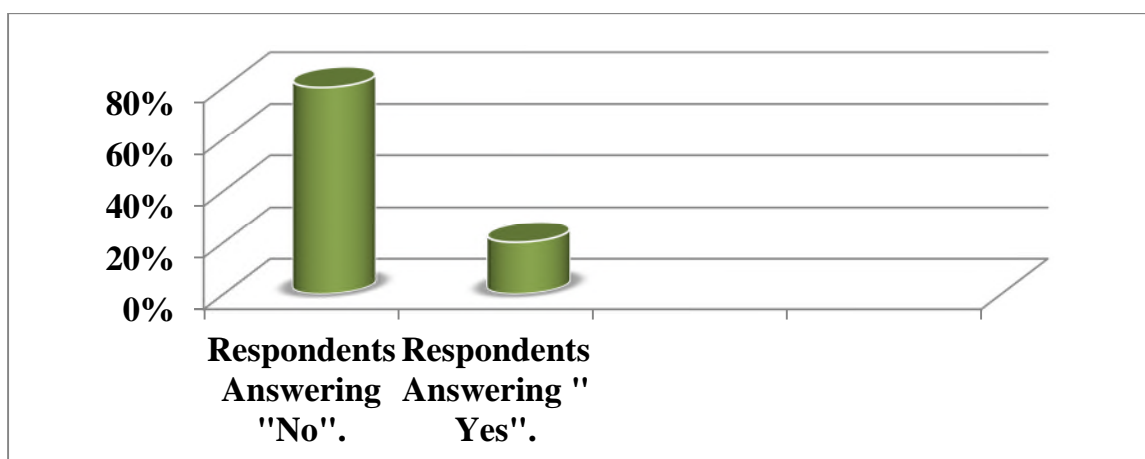
Noticing learners working in pairs or groups, exchanging ideas, solving group conflicts, discussing answers and trusting each other guided a ratio of (50%) of the research population, that is, 5 instructors to say that their learners prefer working collaboratively many times during each grammar lecture, because they want to be praised by their tutors especially when their answers are right in a one hand, and learning from their competent classmates in the other hand. The remaining half of the sample population (50%) namely 5 practitioners, have mentioned manifold insights: Two (2) of them confirmed that their educators prefer either working individually, competitively or cooperatively, depending on the situation which differ from one learner's opinion to another. The last three (3) instructors reported that their learners like working in pairs.

□ **Question 5:** What innovations you usually make to engage students more in the grammar learning process?

This question was targeted towards the main techniques teachers make use of in their grammar classroom and which appeared to them a kind of innovation. According to this question's findings, two (2) tutors stated that they make use of video projector presentations, exchanging e-mails with their learners and making courses in the University site. However, four (4) others reported that they give more freedom to their students by asking them to go to the library or use communication technologies for their own research. Another teacher mentioned that she recommends their learners to prepare their lectures before they come to study it in the classroom, after she puts them either in pairs or in groups for the sake to join their efforts. Other tutor, however, revealed that she make use of inductive method as a recent way of teaching language grammar. According to her, this method gives learners fruitful opportunity to work, challenge and motivate, she also added that assessment tests and self-evaluation techniques improve the quality of teaching/learning situation. Besides, the two remaining teachers escaped from answering this question by saying "no idea".

□ **Question 6:** Have you ever attended any workshop, conference, or symposium where cooperative learning was spoken about?

According to the obtained results, the quasi-totality of teachers that is a ratio of (80%) answered by "no", which means that they never attended any conference or workshop where cooperative learning was tackled. On the other hand the two (2) remaining ones representing (20%) responded by "yes". Results are summarized in the following bar-graph:



Bar-Graph 2.5. Teacher' Attendance in Conferences Where Cooperative Learning Was Tackled.

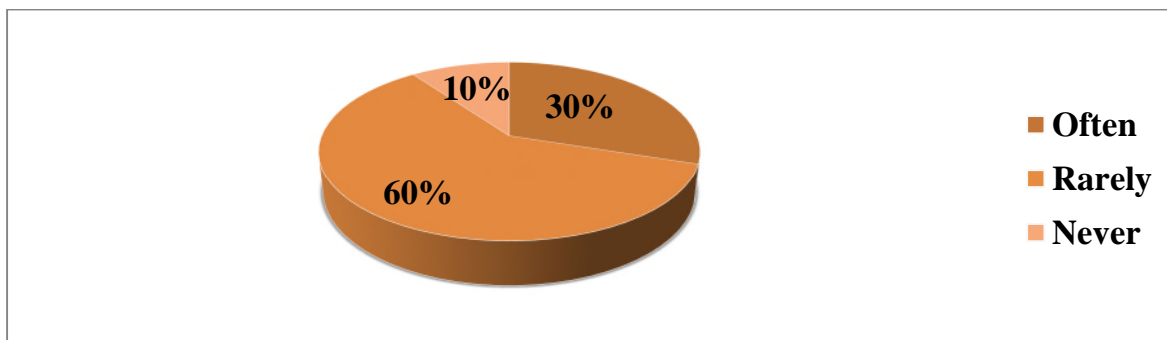
□ **Question 7:** What does mean to you cooperative learning?

Instructors' definitions of cooperative learning were manifold. The first respondent mentioned that in a cooperative learning process, students have to work and learn altogether without overreliance on their tutors' guidance which means that learners are responsible for their own learning. This point was also confirmed by four (4) others practitioners when they defined cooperative learning method as student-centered teaching. Another definition which is reported by three (3) instructors and appeared to be interesting is that: cooperative learning means putting students in pairs or group for the sake of solving a problem or completing a task. Finally, the two (2) remaining practitioners gave a definition centered on the idea of sharing knowledge with each other.

□ **Question 8:** How often do you use group work when teaching grammar?

This question along side with the two following questions (8 and 9) has interest in uncovering the frequency of use of cooperative learning by EFL grammar teachers. Statistics obtained from this question demonstrated that only one (1) instructor representing (10%) confirms that she never use group work when teaching grammar three others that is a ratio of (30%) revealed that they use it commonly. However, the biggest proportion of informants namely (60%) pinpointed that they rarely use cooperative learning method. These results confirmed the seventh question addressed to learners and the second hypothesis as

well. Details about his question's findings are summarized in the following pie-chart:



Pie-Chart 2.5. Frequency of Use of Cooperative Group.

- **Question 9:** How many students are there in each group?

On what regard this question, it further searched the number of students EFL grammar teachers use in each group. As obtained in the findings, six (6) instructors representing (60%) from the sample population use either pairs or group work which encompasses 3 to 4 learners. However, two other tutors, that is, a ratio of (20%) confirmed that they use only two learners in each group. The remaining (20%) of teachers affirmed that their groups include 3 to 4 scholars.

- **Question 10:** Do you set up the groups on the basis of: proficiency, gender, students setting together, learners' preference, or others?

Tutors' opinions concerning such question were several, divided between those who set up their groups on the basis of students setting together (5 teachers, a ratio of 50%) , and who place them according to their proficiency(1practitioner representing 10%) and those who choose the fourth preposition namely "learners' preferences" (3 respondents, that is , 30%). Besides, the remaining teacher (10%) gave her personal insight; she mentioned that she prefers mixed-abilities groups as a technique for organizing her groups.

- **Question 11:** Do you emphasize using English when students are doing grammar's activities within the same group?

Results of this question demonstrated that the whole sample population of teachers, that is, (100%) prefer insisting on using English language when their scholars do grammar's activities within the same group.

□ **Question 12:** If you are asked to summarize the process of structuring cooperative learning in the classroom, what would you say?

This question was intended to tap information about teachers' perspectives concerning how cooperative learning can be structured in the classroom. Four (4) instructors representing (40%) of the present sample population mentioned that planning cooperative learning is just giving the activity to learners and then recommending them to do it according to their preferences namely: either alone, in pairs or in groups. While two (2) others did not give the researcher any clarification about how they structure this method in their classes. Moreover, a ratio of (30%), that is, three informants geared the essential points in structuring cooperation in the classroom involving, designing the groups, providing them with a challenging task in order to accelerate their learning, then controlling the groups' progress in work by moving around them in relation to the time specified for the assignment.

□ **Question 13:** In your view, what might be the reasons behind not using cooperative learning by most EFL teachers in their classrooms?

The last question was opened for teachers' perspectives on the major reasons behind the neglect of cooperative learning in their classrooms. Nine instructors from ten contributed in the proposition of some motives which mainly involved:

1. The difficulty of mastering students sitting together.
2. Avoiding noise resulted from designing learners in groups.
3. Teachers' worry that they could not assess each students' level individually.
4. The instructors' lack of knowledge about cooperative learning method.
5. Avoiding debates that are out of grammar tasks.
6. Tutors' fear of consuming their time when structuring cooperative learning in their classes.
7. Avoiding making learners working in groups so, they depend on themselves the day of exams.
8. Being uncertain of the outcomes of gathering students in groups.

Finally, the remaining teacher could express nothing when being asked about the motives behind the disregard of cooperative learning. She illustrated; "I do not know but they should".

2.7.1.3. Interpretation of the Results

In fact, teachers' questionnaire was of a paramount role in helping the examiner to collect valuable information about instructors' methods in teaching grammar, their strategies in gathering students to work in groups, and finally their motives behind the neglect of cooperative learning in their classes. Although the present questionnaire were not contradictory free, it gave the examiner the chance to interpret the central believe leading the present research work.

Results' interpretation have confirmed that even though the quasi-totality of tutors (60%) prefer the learner-directed approach rather than teacher-centered paradigm, their strategies in engaging their learners in the learning process appear to be still traditional since six of them that is a ratio of (60%) confirmed that they prefer the deductive method as a way of teaching grammar. Besides, the fact of asking students to go to the library or use communication technologies adds validation to the information above.

Furthermore, despite the fact that six practitioners reported that their educators are motivated to work cooperatively in grammar classes, the same number of them chose the word "rarely" when being asked about their frequency of using group work during their grammar lectures. That is to say, the majority of teachers neglect using cooperative learning method in their classes which clearly confirms the first hypothesis of the present dissertation.

Responses of question seven, twelve and thirteen guarantee to the examiner that the assigned instructors of this study have a small amount, not to say any knowledge, about cooperative learning method .This is one of the motives why this method is not commonly used. Other reasons involve; the difficulty of mastering students sitting together, teachers' fear of consuming their time when structuring cooperative learning in the classroom, being uncertain of the outcomes of gathering students in group, etc.

2.8. Limitation of the Study

Despite the fact that, the present findings have validated the hypotheses presented in this study to claim the neglect of cooperative learning method by the

majority of EFL grammar teachers even though it is very difficult in helping LMD2 students to reach higher academic outcomes and develop their grammar competence. Some limitations of this research work might be noticed before the result could be generalized.

The first limitation was time. With extended time, future researcher might use a number of research instruments which are considered more advantageous to gear the needs of any investigative study and to give its results different dimensions. Longer time would also enable the future investigator to enlarge his or her research through specifying the grammar subjects that are taught through cooperative group to LMD2 learners.

Additionally, the samples of the participants were limited to only one class of the second year LMD students among six classes. The relatively small sample size of the sampling population may influence the representativeness of this study. The reason why, future research on a biggest proportion of both instructors and learner agents are needed in order to gain reliable information and guarantee a number of proofs on the effects of cooperative learning method.

Part Two: Recommendations and Pedagogical Remedies**2.9. Introduction**

Because the empirical phase in the first part of this chapter has allowed the examiner to shed fresh light on some reasons behind the disregard of cooperative learning as an approach to teach grammar to LMD2 students. The second part of this chapter will be conducted towards alternative recommendations and remedies with regard to how the students 'grammar competence will be boosted by cooperative learning method. Such suggestions aim at making both instructors and learners familiar with this method of teaching in a one hand and benefit from it in the other hand.

2.10. Cooperative Learning towards the Change

Due to the big transformations that the world witness nowadays, schools are also continuously changing and the need of an educational system's reformation is vital, even if, the success of change does not happen overnight because it is not an easy task; it is, however, a long-term process that demands special objectives, perseverance in the application of these objectives and the implementation of the knowledge gained from the educational scene namely instructors. By their contribution they will become sufficiently skillful, prepared and disposed to deal with a wide range of learners in various contexts, because they represent the key agents of change.

In fact, educational issues keep the debate open in attempt to find some solutions which gear learners' requirements. In this regard Brody et al. mention:

The realization that complete individualization is not a practical or even desirable solution to meeting the diverse needs of children within a single classroom has led many inclusion advocates to promote cooperative learning as the pedagogy choice.

(Brody et al, 2004:3)

Cooperative learning method is then an environment where the students' needs are taken into consideration and their abilities are recognized. The reason why, instructors should be exposed to this instructional method as a key solution to overcome some educational problems since the poor achievements of learners as well as the default of an educational system might be directed to the quality of education that tutors offer and their training that they have received before getting started in the teaching profession. Consequently, reaching a high quality of education needs a serious emphasis on the power of authority (teachers) in an educational staff.

2.10.1. Implications for Teaching and Teacher Training

A wider look at cooperative learning method does not only encompass cooperation between classmates, but also collaboration of teachers' efforts. By doing so, tutors will take many chances to update their professional knowledge and skills for the sake to encounter their learners' requirements. Such chances may be offered through:

✓ **English Team Conferences:** It is argued to a great extent that both experienced and novice instructors need to collaborate in a meeting, conference symposium or whatever, because these places give them the opportunity to meet major people in the field, debating the different issues arising from their every day contact with teaching / learning situations, uncovering and learning new ideas. As a result, teachers' attendance in such symposiums where cooperative learning is tackled will:

1. Help them learning the main benefits of this instructional method of teaching.
2. Open the debate between them about many issues and aspects they faced when they try to implement cooperative learning.
3. Give them the opportunity to discover and innovate in their own experiences by listening to others' insights and prepositions.
4. Widening their perspectives of today's educational challenges.
5. Aid them to uncover what others are doing.
6. Allow them to establish new relationship with other teachers from around the world.

✓ **Reciprocal Observation:** A vital idea that tutors rely on when trying to formally structure the process of cooperation in their classes. It is to reciprocally observe each other when teaching with this method. That is to say, reciprocal observation opens the realm to fruitful perspectives about instructors' professional development and providing feedback about their strengths and weaknesses in implementing cooperative learning. Consequently, instructors will learn from each others' teaching strategies and experiences. Johnson et al (1991) propose some notes which should be taken into account when practitioners are about to begin reciprocal observations. These notes are the following:

1. Knowing that through this process, they will learn from each other: no matter what their educational and cultural background and experiences are.
2. Specify certain issues to be emphasized for the observation to be fruitful.
3. Feedback should include what the teacher presented and the way it was presented regardless his or her intellectual level and individual competence.
4. Later discussion should precisely include how cooperative learning was implemented, and
5. Respect should characterize the process of observations, feedback as well as discussions.

✓ **Cooperative Planning:** It is widely acknowledged that collaborative planning among teachers guarantee an effective lesson presentation. However, many of them often work in isolation far from their colleagues. By doing so, they will lose the chance to benefit from the collective expertise of their co-workers as their thinking and innovations will be restricted. One way to solve this issue is by identifying the main problems they encountered with their every day contact with the teaching / learning situations and resolving them altogether.

✓ **Writing about Teaching:** Despite the fact that writing articles, journals or diaries appear to be a chore problem by some instructors, it constitutes a source of valuable and useful content to other practitioners. The majority of schools and universities around the world nowadays support this idea by preparing their own magazines in which practitioners' articles are published, and therefore become accessible to both workers and learners who seek to be up-dated with the new

inventions, challenges in different domains of life. As a result, tutors who structured cooperative learning method in their classrooms can transmit their experiences and stories through such away. These experiences will widened the novice teachers' view towards this instructional method at the same time boost them to think about gaining the honor of being a new hero in a new success story of education. The above stated opportunities and many others that instructors have certainly experienced will undoubtedly help them to develop their professional knowledge about planning and designing courses, classroom management and uncovering resources and materials for teaching.

2.12. Cooperative Learning in the Eyes of Learners: Making the Process Easy

As being habituated to work either individually or competitively, learners may not comprehend the idea of sharing ideas, efforts, and materials with their classmates. However, if the power of authority is conscious enough of the knowledge he or she required before penetrating into a cooperative experience namely critical thinking and social skills which encompass the sense of relationship, the difference between students' ways of establishing good social relationship, feeling responsible of the group learning and conflicts, the scholars then become ready to face and resolve the troubles of cooperation.

2.12.1 Teaching Critical Thinking Skills

It is argued that cooperative learning method needs and increases the use of critical thinking skills. In fact, educators nowadays are no more seen as passive participants that absorb linguistic form of language and learn by heart what was presented to them, rather they play the role of active agents by engaging themselves in a reflective thinking process that allow them to think about the suitable evidence which will make them learn, comprehend and accepted what is presented.

Critical thinking skills are generally viewed as prerequisites as they do participate in the evolvment of citizens of this quickly changing world. They are also considered as a call for promoting learners' awareness by making them learning through clear instructions namely they learn how to interpret, formulate hypotheses, predict, decide, infer, and solve problems (Nelson, 2007) with reference to the time

needed for the accomplishment of the task. By doing so, students will grasp how to face some aspects of cooperation.

2.12.2. Teaching Social Skills

As highlighted in chapter one, social skills constitute one from five basic elements of cooperative learning, they are then of a paramount role in making the cooperative process a successful story. Johnson and Johnson (1987:13) are in favour of this point, they mention that: *“obviously, placing socially unskilled students in a learning group and telling them to cooperate will not be successful. Students must be taught the social skills needed for collaboration, and they must be motivated to use them”* . Accordingly, learners have to learn how to respect each other’s ideas, solving group conflicts, these skills are crucial for making the process of cooperation successful. One way of promoting learners’ awareness about the social skills, their significance is to instruct them to students. An instance of this teaching may include: tutors loudly praising a positive attitude of a learner or group of learners or highlighting a specific skill which they may contemporary come across during lecturing. In fact, scholars gain the basic knowledge about social skills from both direct teaching and working in collaborative groups, because this latter is in itself responsible for teaching learners how to interact and treat each other.

2.12.3 Problem Solving

With regard to the space between what is done and what should be done as an issue, then a profound interpretation of what was done and the method which was given is required for reaching and achieving the desired results. What is more, when students join their efforts on doing a grammar task or whatever activities, they may encounter conflicts because of the manifold and different insights they will provide. For this reason, an emphasis on problem solving skill is urgently needed for the sake to prepare learners dealing with whatever challenges when working collaboratively.

One way to augment students’ attention towards problem solving skill is by teaching it to them through a myriad of exercises. One example of such activities includes fairy tales story: language students get experienced by a number of fairy

tales along their studies and which aid both in shaping learners' mind effectively and evolving their language skills.

2.12.4. Listening

Because group conflicts is sometimes resulted from learners' disrespect or interruption to their classmates when they trying to explain their insights. It is then of a paramount role to tackle the listening skill for an effective group interaction from a one hand and releasing the success of cooperative learning in the other hand. In order to achieve such a goal, the tutor may present some activities to their learners in order to teach them how to listen to their peers and respect them when speaking. For example, the instructor may design learners to sit in groups and provide each group with a paper that includes a list of suggested topics. Scholars then are required to select the topic that reflects their preferences and speaking about it one after the other. After finishing the discussion, the tutor may know who interrupted other students and who did not.

2.13. Conclusion

This chapter was based upon describing and interpreting the different data collected from the employed research instruments namely teachers' questionnaire and learners' questionnaire in attempt to check whether EFL instructors make use of cooperative learning as an approach to teach grammar or not. In fact, the results obtained from analyzing data both quantitatively and qualitatively have helped the investigator to confirm the two research hypotheses; the study has set out to answer.

The analysis of the different findings have led to the following conclusions: grammar is the backbone of English language learning that cannot be disassociated from it, a fact which has been argued by the quasi-totality of students. Such confirmation also influenced learners' positive attitudes towards grammar. Another important finding is the scholars' awareness of English language learning objectives in general and those of grammar in particular. What is more, the results of the present investigation also corroborate the fact of learners' preferences to working either collaboratively or in pairs when learning grammar in lieu of working individually, even though their teachers neglected this strategy in teaching.

As a result, learners' viewpoints confirmed the two hypotheses stated before, they guaranteed the neglect of cooperative learning by the majority of EFL teachers when learning grammar. Students also reported that they prefer this instructional method after living the experience. That is to say, they assured the data collected from teachers' questionnaire. At the end and for all these reasons the researcher gave some practical suggestions and recommendations in order to make the process of cooperative learning easy in the eyes of both teachers and students.

General Conclusion

GENERAL CONCLUSION

This dissertation has primarily attempted to examine to what extent cooperative learning method is effective to boost secondary year LMD learners of the English department at Tlemcen University to learn grammar. It has equally been targeted towards checking whether EFL instructors rely on this instructional method when teaching grammar or not. In this sense the investigator endeavored to test the hypotheses the study has talked, at the same time raised both learners' and instructors' awareness of the usefulness of cooperative learning. This issue has been dealt with in two interrelated chapters in attempt to provide clear answers to the questions leading the present research work.

Chapter one was primarily concerned with the theoretical landscape of this dissertation. In fact, it attempted to highlight the concepts and approaches related to cooperative learning and grammar. It has as well managed to clear their types and methods. By the end the focus has moved on the current researches and the important results of structuring cooperation in the classroom for the sake to enhance EFL students to learn grammar.

Chapter two addressed the methodology, described the study participants, data collection procedures and data analysis in addition to some suggestions and pedagogical remedies regarding the findings obtained from this chapter. Accordingly, two questionnaires were administered to both poles of the research population: students and their teachers. Findings in this empirical phase have been synthesized to arrive at the following concluding remarks:

Learners' positive attitudes towards learning English in general and its grammar in particular. A fact which gave birth to the students' awarness of the learning of this language. What is more, this investigation also highlighted students' preferences of working in groups when learning grammar in lieu of working individually or

competitively, besides to their feelings which demonstrated higher motivation when joining their efforts as they exposed to a learning environment, which encourages and supports personal, academic and social growth. Moreover, the analysis of the data obtained from the different research instruments has also pointed the opportunities that cooperative learning offered to EFL learners to continually construct their own new knowledge, exchanging information and activate their background knowledge. This interaction has permitted them to live in a living and enjoyable climate which, in turn, enhanced their motivation towards learning English as a foreign language in general and its grammar in particular. This result supports the second research question assumption.

Investigation of the teaching / learning situation with the use of cooperative learning method in the University in question has also revealed realities about teachers' false assumptions concerning cooperative learning. In fact, the quasi-totality of instructors worried that the application of this instructional method in their classes may hinder their scholars' progress in learning grammar as may waist time. The findings resulted from the two questionnaires in the department of English at Tlemcen University, however, did not show the decrease of scholars' academic achievements in learning grammar. Such results provide hence positive feedback to the present research first hypothesis.

Last but not least, it should be noticed that the present research work does not represent a one- for all solution, because it is difficult to provide an understandable work in which every detail about both cooperative learning and grammar are taken into account. As a result, the end of this study opens the doors to further research in which a deepest comprehending of other aspects of grammar and cooperative leaning are offered which, in turn, helps EFL students in reaching higher academic outcomes and developing their grammar competence.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Learners' Questionnaire

Learners' Questionnaire

Dear students,

I am presently conducting a research work for the sake of evaluating your grammar competence after working with cooperative learning as well as your attitudes towards this method of teaching. You are therefore kindly required to answer the following questions with interest and attention, which may contribute to the success of the present research.

Rubric One: Personal Information

Age:

Sex: **a. Male** **b. Female**

Repetitive: **a. Yes** **b. No**

Rubric Two: General Information

1. What is your attitude towards learning English in general?

a. Positive **b. Indifferent** **c. Negative**

2. What are your reasons for learning English?

a. To improve your level in English

b. To understand spoken and written English

c. To score well in your tests and exams

d. To use English fluently

3. In this case do you find your grammar lessons useful in achieving such purposes?

a. Yes **b. No**

Why?

.....
.....

4. Do you think learning grammar of English is :

a. Very important **b. Important** **c. Less important**

5. Would you please describe how did the lectures of grammar go in classroom during the past years?

.....
.....

6. When learning grammar in class, do you prefer?

- ✓ To work individually
- ✓ To work in pair
- ✓ To work in small group

Why?

.....
.....
.....

7. How often does your teacher ask you to work in cooperative groups?

- Always
- Often
- Rarely
- Never

8. When working on grammar activities in groups, what dominated most? (Tick only one box which most nearly reflects your opinion)

- a. Group members' explanations to you
- b. Your explanations to the group members
- c. You all involved in discussions

9. How do you situate your grammar level after working cooperatively?

- a. Good
- b. Average
- c. Low

10. What skills you have learnt when working with cooperative learning? (You can tick more than one box).

- ✓ The sense of building relationships among students and responsibility
- ✓ Respecting each other's ideas
- ✓ Caring about others' learning
- ✓ Solving group conflicts

✓ Others (Please, specify)

.....
.....

11. When you work in small groups, do you feel that you are?

- ❖ Strongly motivated
- ❖ Motivated
- ❖ Less motivated
- ❖ Not motivated

12. How would you describe the process of working cooperatively?

- a. Disturbing
- b. Unexciting
- c. Exciting
- d. Enjoyable

13. Do you face difficulties when working in cooperative groups during grammar classes?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please specify

.....
.....
.....

14. After having been taught with the three following approaches, how would you order them according to your own preference? (Use numbers).

- 1. Individualistic approach
- 2. Competitive approach
- 3. Cooperative approach

Appendix B: Teachers' Questionnaire

Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear Teachers,

I submit you the following questionnaire, necessary for conducting a work of research concerning cooperative learning as a teaching method. It is also an attempt to know what might be the reasons behind not using this method in our EFL classrooms, though it is discussed in so much literature.

Thus, you are kindly requested to tick the appropriate answer according to your own perspective and make comments where necessary. I would be very delighted to receive your sincere collaboration.

Rubric One: Personal Information

a. University

b. Age

c. Degree

- Licence
- Master
- Magister
- PHD (Doctorate)

d. Total number of years of experience in teaching the English language

Rubric Two: General Information

1. As being a grammar teacher, which method do you prefer to use when teaching grammar?

- Inductive
- Deductive
- Eclectic

2. According to you, do you prefer teacher-centered teaching or learner- directed teaching, why?

.....
.....

3. Do you think that your students are motivated to work in grammar classes?

a. Yes

b. No

If no, why?

.....
.....

4. In your opinion, do students prefer working individualistically, competitively or cooperatively? Why?

.....
.....

5. What innovations you usually make to engage students more in the grammar learning process?

.....
.....

6. Have you ever attended any workshop, conference or symposium where cooperative learning was spoken about?

A. Yes

B. No

7. What does mean to you cooperative learning?

.....
.....

8. How often do you use group work when teaching grammar?

☞ Always

☞ Often

☞ Rarely

☞ Never

9. How many students are there in each group?

☞ Pairs

☞ 3-4

☞ 5-6

☞ More than 6

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

- Proficiency
- Gender
- Students sitting together
- Students' preference
- Others (please, specify)

.....

.....

.....

11. Do you emphasize using English when students are doing grammar's activities within the same group?

- a.** Yes **b.** No

12. If you are asked to summarize the process of structuring cooperative learning in the classroom, what would you say?

.....

.....

.....

13. In your view, what might be the reasons behind not using cooperative learning by most EFL teachers in their classrooms?

.....

.....