

**DEMOCRATIC AND POPULAR REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA
MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC
RESEARCH
UNIVERSITY OF TLEMCCEN
FACULTY OF LETTERS AND LANGUAGES
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES
SECTION OF ENGLISH**



**Implementing Cooperative Learning in an EFL
Grammar Classroom to Enhance Learners' Outcomes
The Case of Second Year EFL Students at Tlemcen
University**

Dissertation Submitted in Candidacy of the Degree of "Magister" in
Educational Psychology

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Academic Year: 2012 – 2013

DEDICATION

To my parents; who supported me, in different ways, to reach for my dream. Thank you for providing me with stress-free moments and encouragement from the start to the completion of this work.

To my sweetheart sisters, whom I wish to witness their success in this life, just like they did to me.

In memory to my dear, Mrs. Jamila ZEGHOUDI, whose graciousness has always been a source of inspiration to me; may she rest in peace.

To my new friends, who offered me an amazing new life.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I consider it an immense honor to be under the supervision of Dr. A. BELMEKKI; who, despite his many other academic and professional commitments, was pushing me to do my best in many areas of my life. I appreciate very much the way he inspired me with his wisdom and knowledge. To him I say, God brought you in my life to teach me many things, and I learned a lot professionally and personally.

I am also so grateful to Mr. A. BENZIANE and Mrs. W. MOURO for granting me the honor of teaching grammar at the level of the English Department at Tlemcen University. In fact, without this, my work would be in vain.

Besides, I am indebted to Dr. R. ZIDANE for her insightful pieces of advice about how the research methodology should be, and also the teachers with whom I conducted the interview.

I thank the board of the examiners including Dr. Y. ZEGHOUDI, Pr. Z. BOUHADIBA, Dr. I. SERIR, and Dr. R. ZIDANE and I appreciate the fact of accepting to read and examine my research work.

It gives me a great pleasure in acknowledging the support of Ms. Z. DJEBBARI and Ms. A. BENABDALLAH. I simply thank them for sharing with me some of their experience.

In fact, I share the credit of my work with my uncle, Mr. M. SOUARIT as well as my friends Mrs. W. SEBBAGH and Mrs. H. BERRAHOUÏ who all boosted me morally along this process and provided me with great information resources.

I also owe sincere and earnest thankfulness to Ms. N. MESTFAOUI for providing me with some needed information, to my friend Mr. S. A. ALEM for helping me with some tips of computing and translating, to Mr. Y. Tenkob for his valuable pieces of advice; and to students of cooperative learning who were both my challenge and inspiration.

ABSTRACT

As teachers decide what learning goals students should achieve, what content should be taught to students, and what prior knowledge students have; parallel decisions should be made regarding how to operate within the whole teaching/learning process. Presently, teaching is built on the premise that students are just as responsible as their teachers in the process of education. They are required to search, discuss, ask and answer, and participate in problems' solving rather than only passively receiving the new assigned academic knowledge. One of the methods in which all the previous criteria are believed to merge is cooperative learning. In spite of the fact that this method is discussed in so many books, articles, conferences and workshops all over the world; and though an enhancement in the learners' social and academic outcomes has been proved in numerous studies, teachers still neglect this method of teaching and rely on traditional ways. Thus, an implementation of this method in EFL classrooms seems to be worth trying. Accordingly, the present work deals with second year LMD students of English at Tlemcen University. It aims, also, at demonstrating to both teachers and students how useful cooperative learning is, and how different it is from the competitive and the individualistic approaches. Being an action research, its purpose is, mainly exploring the relationship of working in cooperative groups to the students' achievement in the grammar class. The data collected through the research instruments have been analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively, and positive results have been achieved, i.e., the grammar competence of learners has been enhanced and the research hypotheses have been confirmed.

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

STAD: Student Teams-Achievement Divisions

GRPQ: Guided Reciprocal Peer Questioning

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

BA: Bachelor of Arts

LMD: License-Master-Doctorate

TEFL: Teaching English as a Foreign Language

AR: Action Research

PhD: Philosophy Doctorate

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General Introduction

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Teaching EFL is conceived as one of the dynamic processes in this increasingly changing world. In fact, there is a considerable number of complicating factors that face our EFL learners along their learning process; ranging between being obliged to deal with different and sometimes confusing aspects of language, missing the sense of enjoyment in the educational setting where English is taught, or simply lacking the needed skills to learn a language. While students may feel satisfied and motivated in some situations including learning about the target culture, speaking English in oral production courses, or composing in written production courses; they may still show some difficulties in grammar for instance. The issue is that learners of English feel confused with too much details about English prepositions, articles and mainly tenses.

The field of educational psychology carefully attempts to analyse the different learning settings to understand the complexity of the educational process and, thus, tries to provide our EFL learners with some practical solutions to the main problems they may face. One of the valuable characteristics of educational psychology concerns the fact that it brings what is known about other disciplines and applies it to the field of education for better teaching and learning processes.

Regarding the difficulties that EFL students encounter, cooperative learning has been suggested as an alternative solution to the student-centered approach in a lot of works. The reason is that graduate students will neither work nor live alone in this world. Conspicuously, an abundant amount of interaction will be faced by individuals during their work experiences. Students, though may learn even in competitive and individualistic instructional settings, can learn better in cooperative situations as they develop positive relationships with peers and gain knowledge from interaction with group mates.

Reading about the teaching techniques and methods will in all probabilities lead teachers to come across a journal, a book, or an instructional material where cooperative learning is highlighted and discussed. The reason stands on the fact that

most researchers aim at spreading the magic of cooperative learning all over the world; seeking essentially to convince teachers that this approach is worth trying in EFL classrooms as well. Actually, the most optimal approaches that better positively influence the learners' social and academic outcomes are the ones which have their roots in the human development, teaching, and learning theories. The success of cooperative learning is claimed to be mainly due to the theoretical foundations, and the numerous experimental implementations in various contexts around the world.

The main premise of this approach centers around the idea that students benefit from working in cooperative groups both socially and academically. Additionally, this helps in unveiling the hazy knowledge that students may have from the teacher's explanations. It is highly advocated that individuals learn from each other in both formal and informal settings and that cooperative learning is appropriate for every age students and for every subject area. In the educational situations, where cooperative learning was implemented, unusual results were achieved; including higher academic outcomes and increasing positive relationships among peers.

Despite being introduced years ago in some counties including USA, cooperative learning is till unappreciated in so many others, which among them the Algerian University. This means, though our EFL teachers may continuously think of innovations that may change the traditional educational process to an enjoyable, a worthwhile and a satisfactory process; such as including audio and visual aids and sharing their teaching experiences with each other; it still sounds a discounted idea to split students into groups and let them experience working together.

Thus, the present work aims at highlighting the major aspects that should be taken into account when trying to implement cooperative learning. It is fundamentally based on an action research where students were trained to work cooperatively in an attempt to enhance their grammar competence. Learners experienced working with peers in formal cooperative groups to develop the sense of interacting with different people of different views; and at the same time caring about others and learning from them.

In other terms, the general enquiry of this research work is to display whether and how cooperative learning may enhance our EFL learners' grammar competence though they keep complaining about how confusing the rules of the English grammar are. Accordingly, the objectives of this study can be summarised in what follows:

- Provide the reader with the main aspects of cooperative learning.
- Examine to what extent is cooperative learning effective in the EFL classroom in terms of academic outcomes of the learners.
- Demonstrate to teachers how useful cooperative learning is to enhance learners' grammar competence.
- Try to change the learners' view about a one-way approach (individualistic or competitive) to be the only way to the achievement of better academic outcomes.

In view of that, the following general question has been put forward: What might be the effects of cooperative learning on EFL learners' grammar competence? Taking into account the previous general question, three other sub-questions were formulated in an attempt to obtain a reliable answer:

- Do our EFL grammar teachers make use of cooperative learning?
- May cooperative learning be a useful approach to enhance our EFL learners' grammar competence?
- Would cooperative learning change our EFL learners' preferences from competitive and individualistic learning to working collaboratively?

The following hypotheses, hence, have been proposed to investigate the above research questions:

- Most of our EFL teachers do not rely on cooperative learning as an approach to teaching grammar.
- Cooperative learning may help our EFL students reach higher academic outcomes and develop their grammar competence.

- The learners' preferences may change from a competitive and individualistic approach to a cooperative learning experience.

This work has been conceived as essentially four chapters; each was devoted to tackle one of the aspects of the research problematic. Being a theoretical one, the first chapter introduces cooperative learning to the reader by defining the process and how it should be structured in a classroom. Besides, the chapter cites the main characteristics and types of cooperative learning as well as the main theoretical rationales for this method.

The second chapter is, basically, a descriptive chapter of the target situation analysis, in which the researcher described the research setting, i.e., the English Department at Tlemcen University, and the research participants as well. Additionally, deliberate explanations for the research type, i.e., Action Research, and the research instruments, namely the interview, the tests and the questionnaire were given.

The next chapter strives to analyse the data gathered through the previously mentioned research tools. The analysis was both qualitative and quantitative; and the comparison between the pre-test and the post-test scores was undergone through 'Descriptive Statistics' and 't-tests'. The aim of the third chapter, in fact, is to answer the research questions and to validate the research hypotheses.

Finally, the fourth chapter was provided to shed light on how significant training teachers to make use of a cooperative approach is; to introduce the successful stories of teaching innovations, and which in turn may be a source of inspiration for teachers. In addition to that, a set of pieces of advice, including some tips, were given to teachers to facilitate to them the implementation of cooperative learning in their classrooms.

CHAPTER ONE

Key-concepts and Approaches

- 1.1. Introduction
- 1.2. Student-Student Interaction: *Basic Patterns*
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1.9. Conclusion

1.1. Introduction

Cooperative learning is an instructional approach in which students are put into small groups to achieve mutual goals. In some situations, teachers may think of structuring cooperative learning in their classes. They may, merely, put students sit into groups and give them a task to accomplish. These two aspects, though important, do not make cooperative learning what it is. Teachers, then, should be enlightened with all what concerns cooperative learning to make it work.

Accordingly, this chapter provides the reader with the basic definitions of the concepts and approaches related to cooperative learning including its main elements, types and methods. It highlights, also, the current researches and the important results of structuring cooperation in the classroom.

1.2. Student-Student Interaction: *Basic Patterns*

Extensive research on teacher-student interaction was conducted for the sake of demonstrating how it should be and how it influences students' academic and social development. However, it is not the only kind of interaction that takes place in the classroom. Instead, there are other forms including student-student interaction and which has the most influence on their achievement.

Whatever the desired learning goal is, teachers can structure different types of interdependence among students and which in turn determines the way they interact with each other and how far they progress in their learning process. The type of interdependence depends on what goal structure is dominating the classroom. Johnson and Johnson clarified this point saying that: **“A goal structure specifies the type of interdependence among students as they strive to accomplish their learning goals. It specifies the ways in which students will interact with each other and the teacher during the instructional session”** (1987: 3).

The term 'goal structure' is used to refer to the state of working cooperatively, competitively, or individualistically in the classroom. In every classroom, whatever the age of the learners or the subject being taught are, one of the following three goal

structures can dominate the instructional situation. Learners can either work individualistically without caring of others, competitively where everyone challenges the others to see who can do best, or cooperatively where students are placed in small groups to assist one another in order to achieve a one common learning goal.

1.2.1. Competitive Classrooms

In competitive classrooms, the fact of working against each other dominates the whole situation. Students try always to learn, focus, search, ask, and participate more than their peers do. Additionally, they benefit when their peers are deprived of knowledge and success; and they celebrate the failure of others. They even work independently without seeking any help from others except the teacher.

This competitive atmosphere creates a type of interdependence that is referred to as 'Negative Interdependence' as it is briefly and clearly said by Johnson and Johnson: **“In such competitive situations there is a negative interdependence among goal achievements; students perceive that they can obtain their goals if and only if the other students in the class fail to obtain their goals”** (1987: 4).

Significantly, schools are seen as 'competitive enterprises' in the eyes of the majority of students and they either do their best to faster and more accurately complete the task or they relax simply because they do not have enough self-confidence to engage in such struggles.

1.2.2. Individualistic Classrooms

The second option, that teachers have, concerns structuring **“...lessons individualistically so that students work by themselves to accomplish learning goals unrelated to those of the other students”** (ibid). Admittedly, in such classes, students are passive participants in the learning process; they have no role except listening to the teacher attentively and doing the assigned tasks individually. Each student takes care of only his/her own materials and achievement. Moreover, they

believe that the learning of others does not by any mean influence their own learning. This appears to be the reason why no interdependence is related to this goal structure.

1.2.3. Cooperative Classrooms

Students can also be split into small groups to work collaboratively for the sake of achieving the common goals. They strive for making each member of the group benefits from the others and for celebrating the success of the whole group. Students believe that they can achieve their goals if and only if their peers reach their own goals (Zhang, 2012). This goal structure is characterised mainly by students feeling responsible for their own and others' learning. This feeling of caring of others is what makes 'Positive Interdependence' an essential part in these cooperative situations. Johnson and Johnson stated in this sense: **"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"** (1987: 6).

Certainly, the three goal structures are not in a win-lose challenge. Each of the three can bring students to success if structured appropriately. However, the great deal of research, consisting of 600 studies over 90 years, proved that cooperative learning results in better outcomes in terms of academic achievement, peer relationships and psychological health when compared to competitive and individualistic learning. Cooperative learning, then, is believed to be a potential solution to a number of teaching problems. The more students work in cooperative groups, the more they understand and learn better such that when they try to share their knowledge with others. Additionally, they develop positive attitudes towards their peers, classroom and the entire school. In this respect, Zhang (2012: 1) added:

Even though these three goal structures are effective in helping students learn concepts and skills in some conditions, students can learn to interact more effectively and positively in cooperative learning process. Compared with competitive and individualistic goal structure, therefore, cooperative goal

structure should be the best choice of our life, schooling, family, career, etc.

Cooperative learning is the topic of so much literature. It is relatively impossible to find a scientific journal or an instructional material that does not discuss cooperative learning as being a useful approach to teaching (Johnson & Johnson, 2008). In spite of this fact, and though it is considered the most important of the three goal structures, it is currently still not used. Moreover, it is relatively and significantly neglected by teachers (Johnson et al, 1991).

1.2.4. Traditional Groups Vs Cooperative Groups

Traditional classes involve students who work competitively to determine who is best or individualistically without caring of others' performance. In such classes, students merely interact with printed materials, visual aids and their teachers (Hecox, 2010). At certain times, teachers seek to break the routine so they ask students to sit and work in groups. Basically, this is not enough to say that cooperation is being structured among students. **“Traditionally, primary schools have often organised pupils to sit in groups of four or six, although interaction between them may be very limited”** (Jolliffe, 2007: 4). In such groups, pupils keep complaining ‘He is copying me’, simply because they do not even know that working collaboratively and sharing knowledge and materials are the main aspects of cooperative groups. In some tasks, only one student is asked by his/her group mates to do the work while they go for a free ride and only write their names on the report. These groups, in fact, are no more than putting students sit near each other while each participant does his individual work or only one student does a common work for the whole group.

Teachers who seek to structure cooperation in the classroom cannot do so unless they take into consideration some basic elements of cooperative learning. In fact, **“To become cooperative, groups must work together to accomplish shared goals. They need to discuss work with each other and help each other to understand it”** (ibid 4). Otherwise, teachers will be structuring only traditional groups instead of cooperative ones.

Cooperative and traditional classrooms are also different from each other in terms of teachers' roles, teaching activities, interaction and evaluation. Teachers when structuring cooperative groups, act as observers of how each group and each member is functioning. They offer support when needed and facilitate the process by explaining the task and intervening to solve the group conflicts. Cooperative groups promote a different way in which students interact with each other. This two-way communication involves discussion and working together to accomplish shared goals. Teachers, at the end, are supposed to evaluate each student's outcomes and also the development of the whole learning process.

The teachers' role in the process of cooperative learning can be summarised in the following five major strategies. Clearly specifying the objectives is the first step that the teacher must make. Before the lesson starts, the teacher should have already set what goals to be achieved by learners concerning both the assigned academic content and the collaborative skills. Secondly, the teacher is supposed to decide all about the size, the type, and the heterogeneity of the cooperative groups depending on some factors including the class size and his/her experience in using cooperative learning.

Teachers who seek to structure cooperative learning in their classrooms also need to know how the assigned materials should be distributed and how the assigned task should be explained. If the learning groups are new, teachers should carefully make sure that all the group members are using the materials; however, his responsibility may be decreased if the groups are skillful enough in working collaboratively. Also, explaining the task can take the form of a usual traditional lecture where the teacher deliberately explains the lesson and the related concepts, relates the new lesson to the students' prior knowledge, and checks whether students are effectively grasping the point by engaging them in a two-way communication where the teacher asks and the students answer (Johnson & Johnson, 1987).

The teacher's role begins in earnest when students are already put in groups and have started to work together. Placing students in cooperative groups does not mean that teachers will have a break of some free time; instead, teachers engage in an observation process to check which groups are facing troubles in completing the task

and intervene to offer help. The teacher may also intervene when noticing a conflict or an inappropriate behaviour within the group. Finally, the teacher should evaluate the students' learning usually by a criteria-referenced system. Additionally, he/she may determine how well the groups are functioning in terms of social relationships and social skills (ibid).

On the other hand, traditional classes involve an emphasis on drills, practices and review of knowledge with authoritative teachers acting as controllers. They just transmit knowledge through a one-way communication; and they evaluate only the academic outcomes of learners (Wang, 2007).

In traditional learning situations, students may feel unmotivated, frustrated, and exhausted. However, cooperative groups promote enjoyment of the learning experience to students. In this respect, Johnson and Johnson (1987: 67) added:

In the process of working together to achieve shared goals students can come to care about one another on more than just a professional level. Extraordinary accomplishments result from personal involvement with the task and each other.

Moreover, it increases their learning outcomes and strengthens their psychological health and their relationships with peers.

1.3. About Cooperative Learning: A Background Account

A wide range of astonishing educational problems was calling for solutions and the idea that a quiet class is a learning class was no more appreciated. These two facts are, in fact, the reason why cooperative learning was suggested (Slavin, 1991).

While there was little research on cooperative learning in the early days of this century, cooperative learning became the concern of extensive researches and the topic of so much literature. In Slavin's view, "**The term refers to classroom techniques in which students work on learning activities in small groups and receive rewards or recognition based on their group's performance**" (1980: 315). Working in

groups enables students to interact with each other so to accomplish their learning activities. Johnson *et al* (1991: 3) contend that:

Cooperation is working together to accomplish shared goals. When engaged in cooperative activities, individuals seek outcomes that are beneficial to themselves and to all other members of the group. Cooperative learning is the instructional use of small groups so that students work together to maximize their own and each other's learning.

In cooperative learning, students are active participants as far as they help each other to learn the assigned academic content. They go through a process of discussing and arguing with each other, evaluating each other's knowledge and ensuring each other's understanding (Slavin, 1995). Students in cooperative groups, also, need to keep accountable for their own learning as much as they care about their peers' learning.

The term "Cooperative Learning" may sound familiar. But, in fact, cooperative learning is neither making students sit side-by-side at the same table, talking to each other while doing their individual work, nor having a group of students in which only one student does the whole work and the others mention their names on the product. Some teachers believe that they are structuring cooperation in their classroom. However, they are still stuck to traditional learning groups; simply because they miss the real essence of cooperative learning. Educators, then, must carefully structure the groups so they become truly cooperative and so that cooperative learning takes place. They must make sure that each group is characterised by the five elements that differentiate cooperative groups from traditional groups and which make cooperative learning what it is. These include: Positive Interdependence, Individual Accountability, Face-to-Face Interaction, Social Skills and Group Processing (Gaikwad, 1996).

Cooperative learning is said to be relevant for problem solving situations, for conceptual tasks, and for activities that require creative answers. After deciding what learning goals are desired, teachers may put students in groups of two to six. Johnson and Johnson's advice for beginning teachers was to start with groups that consist of a

small number of students (1987). Group participants should sit in a way that facilitates discussion and they should make sure the five elements are carefully included. The teacher's role lies in intervening to provide assistance when needed, to make an end to group conflicts or to evaluate each student's achievement using a criteria-referenced evaluation system (ibid).

Although cooperative learning is regarded as a difficult way of teaching, it is appropriate for every age learners and for the teaching of any subject matter. This is what has been confirmed by Johnson and Johnson when saying that **“Cooperation is appropriate for any instructional task”** (1987: 44). It is through working in groups that learners acquire knowledge and develop skills such as working with others. A noticeable body of research shows that cooperative learning allows students to interact with their peers, participate in elaborative discussions and, therefore, learn from each other. Thus, when structured appropriately; cooperative learning results in a better achievement, good interpersonal relationships and psychological health. Cooperative learning, therefore, is an educational psychology success story.

This instructional method may be traced back to the beginning of the 20th century with John Dewey **“...who emphasized education as a vehicle for teaching citizens to live cooperatively in social democracy”** (Cooper et al, 1994: 1). Later, in the 1930s and the 1940s, the work of the social psychologist Kurt Lewin on group dynamics influenced Morton Deutsch who is one of his students. This later could develop the theory of interdependence highlighting mainly cooperation and competition among students.

The new heroes in the cooperative learning stage include the professor of educational psychology David W. Johnson from the University of Minnesota, in addition to his brother Roger T. Johnson, their colleague Karl A. Smith and Robert Slavin from Johns Hopkins University. These researchers are authors of numerous works and practitioners of cooperative learning for the sake of developing and making it one of the most beneficial approaches. Many researchers, teachers, and PhD students all over the world are following the same path with their research cases, theses, and published articles about cooperative learning. In fact, all the works done demonstrate

that cooperation, if structured appropriately, is relatively the best instructional approach in promoting achievement, critical thinking and psychological health among students.

1.4. Cooperative Learning: *Theoretical Rationales*

Cooperative learning is regarded to be underlined from numerous theories. Researchers like (Robert Slavin, 1995; Roger and David Johnson, 1999) could reach a consensus on which theories form a foundation for cooperative learning. These theories include: *The social Interdependence Theory*, *The Cognitive Development Theory* and *The Behavioral Learning Theory* (Hecox, 2010).

Slavin considers these theoretical perspectives as “...**relevant dimensions that contribute to our understanding of the effects of cooperative learning**” (Su Hoon, 2004: 42-43). The following theories, in fact, offer different insights about how cooperative learning functions and how it effects the learning of students. Additionally, they provide rationale evidences for some aspects of cooperation.

1.4.1. The Social Interdependence Theory

The social interdependence theory highlights learning in social contexts. Basically, the premise of this theory started with Koffka and his followers including Lewin (1935) when they claimed that the common learning goal unifies members in a one group wherein interdependence exists. Later, Deutch (1962), the graduate student of Lewis, went further to suggest that interdependence can be positive when students cooperate together; or negative as they compete against each other (Hecox, 2010). Once more, the social interdependence theory was developed by Johnson and Johnson (1987: 187) when they added:

Social interdependence theory posits that the way social interdependence is structured determines how individuals interact which, in turn, determines outcomes. Positive interdependence (cooperation) results in promotive interaction as individuals encourage and facilitate each other's efforts to learn. Negative interdependence (competition) typically results in oppositional interaction as

individuals discourage and obstruct each other's efforts to achieve.

This theory provides a rationale for the most common used procedures used in cooperative learning. Thus, teachers have to structure social and interactive tasks to promote interaction and learning among students.

1.4.2. The Cognitive Development Theory

The foundation of cooperative learning in the cognitive development theory lies in the works of the Swiss child psychologist Jean Piaget and the Russian developmental psychologist Lev Vygotsky (Hecox, 2010).

Piaget suggested in his theory that cognitive development results in learning. For him, it's not appropriate to keep uploading students with new knowledge. However, they have to be active participants in the learning process. This theory has the premise that **“when individuals cooperate with the environment, sociocognitive conflict occurs, thus creating cognitive disequilibrium, which in turn stimulates perspective-taking ability and cognitive development”** (Johnson et al, 1998: 1).

Cognitive conflicts are one of the aspects spoken about in the theory of Piaget. Those conflicts occur when students face a new information or skill that contradicts their prior knowledge. This, significantly, reflects what happen in cooperative groups. During collaborative discussions, students may face contradictory views of peers. In this case, they try their best to solve the conflict and therefore to construct knowledge.

This theory, also, determines that learning is the result of many processes including understanding, acquisition, organization and storage of knowledge. These processes take place in cooperative groups as the students interact together and negotiate meaning.

Lev Vygotsky's work has been also applied to explain the academic effects of cooperative learning. Particularly, Vygotsky stated in his theory that for learners to deal with cognitive tasks, they need to interact with more competent classmates. This interaction enables them to learn the new skills and information available in the zone

of proximal development which, in turn, refers to the zone between what a person can accomplish by his own and what he/she can do when working with more competent peers (Hecox, 2010).

In brief, it seems that cooperative learning owes too much to the cognitive learning theory when it comes to regarding students as active participants in the learning process rather than passively receiving the teachers' instructions. **"Typically it is the cognitive-development strand that investigates outcomes of homogeneous and heterogeneous groupings, usually by ability or competence level..."** (Su Hoon, 2004: 44).

1.4.3. The Behavioural Learning Theory

Behaviourism has always highlighted the importance of extrinsic motivation to the learning process. This idea of rewarding students represents one of the principles of cooperative learning since teachers are supposed to give extra grades to the members of the group which achieves the assigned criteria. Additionally, even among the group itself, learners feel accountable for their teammates' learning and they try their best to motivate them and reinforce them positively.

In fact, other researchers including Stevens (2008) referred to other theoretical rationales for cooperative learning, mainly:

1.4.4. The Generative Learning Theory

The main premise of generative learning theory speaks about students who explain to their peers using their own words. It suggests that, this way, students will understand better what they explain. Moreover, it helps them to well master it. **"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). Thus, it provides an evidence for the fact that competent students benefit as much as their lower-ability peers from the process of explaining to them.

To make sure that all students gain benefits from cooperative learning, teachers need first to make sure that all the group members engage in dialogues and provide elaborative explanations regardless of their level.

1.4.5. The Sociocognitive Learning Theory

The principles of Albert Bandura's theory are also used to explain how cooperation affects positively the learners' academic outcomes. This theory speaks mainly about how useful is modeling to one's own learning. Through observing others, the student meets new information and skills then learns them. This process of observational learning goes through three basic steps including attention to a specific behaviour, retention of the main aspects of the behaviour, and finally motor reproduction of the same behaviour. The premise held by the sociocognitive learning theory represents exactly what students may face when working collaboratively in groups.

1.5. Cooperative Learning: *Basic Elements*

Group work has often been used in teaching through organising students to sit in groups. It was dominated by competition among the group members and characterised by a noticeable limited interaction between them (Jolliffe, 2007). For this reason, cooperative learning may sound simple for some educators and they may try to group students thinking that they are structuring cooperation in their classrooms. In such a case, they may face some troubles within groups including: self-induced helplessness, ganging-up against one student or against the given task, unfair divisions of labour, as well as dependence and conflicts. Thus, simply putting students into groups does not necessarily mean that cooperative interdependence is being structured and that higher achievement is being promoted.

Conspicuously, cooperation is much more than having students sit side-by-side at the same table; talking to each other while doing their individual tasks (Johnson et al, 1991). Although it is true that being near other students, discussing and arguing with them, and helping them are essential aspects of cooperative learning; they still do not

represent all what cooperation is. Consequently, there must be some rules that have to be respected when trying to structure cooperative groups.

Early research on cooperative learning by Johnson and Johnson (1987) showed that four basic elements are crucial to be included in each group so to be truly cooperative and so that cooperative learning takes place. These include: Positive Interdependence, face-to-face Interaction, Individual Accountability and Small Group Skills. However, later deeper analyses of the groups suggested another element that is also prerequisite in cooperative learning and which is referred to as Group Processing (Johnson et al. 1991; Johnson & Johnson 2008, 2009).

1.5.1. Positive Interdependence

The first basic element is referred to as 'Positive Interdependence' and it is usually described as the heart of cooperative learning (Tinker et al, 2003). It generates the sense that each student's endeavour is needed to achieve the common goal and for the success of the whole group (Tuan, 2010). To be cooperative, groups must inevitably entail positive interdependence and students should realise that they cannot reach their goals unless the other members learn the assigned material (Johnson et al, 1991). In cooperative learning groups, each member is responsible for both learning the assigned academic content and making sure that the other group members are mastering the content too. Students, also, have to know that their efforts are all required to accomplish the task.

When students begin to see that they are learning from their peers in the group and that their peers are learning from them, and when they start sharing material and support each other, only then it can be said that positive interdependence is structured among the group (ibid). Essentially, groups and tasks should be structured so that all the group members contribute and depend upon each other for the sake of the whole group's success. In this respect, Johnson *et al* (1991: 6) claimed that: **“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”**.

In fact, the true conclusion that can be drawn about this element tells that there may be no motivation to cooperate with others without positive interdependence and that the idea of sinking or swimming together can increase cooperation among students. It is this 'all for one, one for all' feeling that leads group members to want to help each other.

1.5.2. Individual Accountability

The second requirement for a well structured cooperative group is referred to as 'Individual Accountability'. It describes the feeling of responsibility that each student has towards his/her own learning and the contribution of each group member to the achievement of the common goal. Each student is considered as important and his/her contribution as indispensable. Thus, every group member must feel accountable for his own learning and must learn the assigned material. Also, assessing each student level of mastery is essential to know who needs support and what kind of support is needed for the sake of maximising each individual's achievement (Johnson & Johnson, 1987).

Individual accountability is the one which guarantees that there are neither sleeping members nor free riders in the group. Therefore, teachers must carefully ensure that individual accountability is implemented in each group. One way to do so involves assessing each member's performance and giving feedback to the whole group. In this respect, Johnson *et al* (1991: 7) claimed that: **"Individual accountability exists when each student's performance is assessed and the results are given back to the group and the individual"**. Assessing students' level can take the form of making students sit for an individual test and then the teacher chooses randomly one student's performance to represent the whole group's level. Only this way, learners can know who is mastering well the assigned material so to assist the others and who is facing troubles in learning so the whole group can assist him/her.

For a cooperative group to achieve the mutual goals, all members should learn the assigned material. Students cannot feel responsible for others' learning if they do not first feel responsible for their learning, and they cannot offer help to their peers if they do not first ensure they are mastering the assigned content.

1.5.3. Face-to-face Interaction

The third element of cooperative learning refers to the state of facing other students when working cooperatively in small groups. In fact, interaction is plentiful in cooperative groups for the sake of sharing knowledge, experiences and even materials. In traditional classes, one type of interaction exists, in which only the teacher speaks and dominates the whole situation. Actually it is not the case with cooperative learning since each group consists of at least one student speaking depending on each member's role (Ekawat, 2010). In cooperative groups, students have face-to-face interaction with each other. Moreover, they interact verbally mainly through agreeing and disagreeing with each other, explanation and elaboration; and linking the presented content to their prior knowledge. For this reason, it seems very essential to place students in a way that enables them to interact easily and effectively (Tuan, 2010).

Because of the proximity, group members work together and interact verbally through explaining to each other the new academic content and its connection with the prior knowledge, discussing the new concepts, and exchanging information with each other. Other facets of interaction include 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 & Johnson, 2008: 24).

Positive interdependence promotes interaction and verbal communication among students which in turn influences their learning. This is what has been confirmed by Johnson *et al* (1991: 18-19):

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.

Students cannot overcome the idea of competitiveness easily. Thus, it is crucial for each member to interact positively with others and to be characterised by trustworthiness so to promote exchanging materials, information and trusting each other's competence. In order to get positive results, teachers also should try to help them by showing them the appropriate use of the social skills needed for human interaction.

1.5.4. Social Skills

Cooperative learning cannot function effectively if there is no use of the social skills with each other. Students need this set of skills so to deal appropriately with conflicts among the group, to know how to trust each other and to make the right decisions. Even communication among them needs social skills to be fruitful. In this sense, Johnson & Johnson (2008: 24) said: **“Interpersonal and small group skills form the basic nexus among individuals, and if individuals are to work together productively and cope with the stresses and strains of doing so, they must have a modicum of these skills”**.

In fact, researchers have identified two divisions of social skills: Group-related Skills which refer to the way group members take turns, support and praise each other, and mediate an end to the conflicts they face; and Task-related Skills including summarizing, paraphrasing, asking, answering, explaining, etc (Tuan, 2010).

The students' lack of social skills may be due to never or rarely working in groups before. Thus, for cooperative learning to take place effectively, students must be provided with a set of direct and clear instructions on how they should communicate with and trust each other, lead the group; and resolve conflicts. Since **“...interpersonal and small group skills of the members may greatly influence the level of members' achievement and productivity”** (Johnson & Johnson, 2008: 24); these human interaction skills should be deliberately taught to students to ensure promoting higher achievement and positive relationships among peers.

1.5.5. Group Processing

This element involves some discussions among the group members about how far they progressed towards the goal, how well they learned the assigned academic content and what behaviour are helpful so to keep or unhelpful so to change (Tinker et al, 2003). **“..., the instructor must ensure that groups process how well they are achieving their goals and maintaining effective working relationships among members”** (Johnson et al, 1991: 8). Thus, time should be given to students so they engage in this self-evaluation process. The purpose of this element is to clarify and improve the effectiveness of the members in contributing to the joint efforts to achieve the group’s goals.

1.6. Cooperative Groups: *Basic Types*

Being new students in college or facing a difficult class may cause to students feelings of helplessness and discouragement. To solve this, teachers may think of structuring groups where students work with their partners. These groups help students to feel more confident, more powerful and more capable to learn because **“Any assignment in any curriculum can be done cooperatively”** (ibid 9). A cooperative group may be one of the following three types: formal, informal, or a base group.

1.6.1. Formal Cooperative Learning Groups

Formal cooperative groups **“...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...”** (Macpherson, 2007: 10). They consist of fixed members and they are carefully structured to ensure heterogeneity among the group participants since it is an essential element for promoting higher achievement.

In formal cooperative learning groups, students are responsible for learning the assigned material and to make sure their group mates are learning too. Interaction among the students is supposed to take the form of supporting each other either with materials, knowledge, or even by encouraging each other. It, also, involves orally

explaining the assigned academic content and reminding the peers how responsible they are to accomplish the shared learning goals. Additionally, **“The cooperative exercise becomes the central message of the class period and is supported by an introductory lecture and a summary”** (Rossetti and Nembhard, 1998: 4).

The teachers' role in structuring 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, and
- ✓ Evaluating students' progress using a criterion-referenced test (Johnson et al, 1991).

1.6.2. Informal Cooperative Learning Groups

To overcome the obstacles of lecturing, teachers need to ensure that their students are cognitively active. One way to do so, is to make students actively cooperate with their peers rather than only passively receive the teacher's instructions. Having the spirit of informal cooperative groups involves spontaneously choosing students to sit and work together such as simply asking a student to work with his/her peer on the right/left. This is often called 'The turn to your neighbor' in the literature of cooperative groups (Rossetti and Nembhard, 1998). Macpherson (2007: 10) added that **“These groups are temporary, ad hoc groups that last for a few minutes, one discussion or class period”**.

Members of informal cooperative groups are chosen very randomly, therefore, they are not obtained neither for the sake of promoting better relationships among students nor for maximising their learning. Instead, they are well-meant for directing students' attention to the assigned material and dealing with it in only one session. They also create a conducive atmosphere to learning. Informal cooperative learning groups are

useful when being used during lectures since they break the usual process of lectures and help students remain focusing rather than drifting away after some minutes.

It's true that the lecture time gets decreased because of the use of informal cooperative groups, but on the other hand, it increases the knowledge learnt and the positive relationships built among teammates (Johnson et al, 1991). Although informal cooperative learning groups are less-structured, students can get essential benefits from them; mainly feeling responsible for learning and contributing to the task, and enjoying the group learning experience.

1.6.3. Base Cooperative Learning Groups

In some cases, college life is different from the school life since students come to attend lectures with people from different regions, whom they may not even talk to. Interaction among students is the only way to establish relationships among them. The use of base groups, then, is influential in creating friendships that last even after college time and providing assistance to present and absent students to better achieve the academic goal (ibid).

Base groups are defined as “...long term cooperative learning groups with stable membership” (Macpherson, 2007: 10). Students in base groups should be of different academic levels so to provide support to each other. Mainly, they provide each other with assistance and encouragement. Their interaction may expand beyond the group and the classroom walls to ask about each student's free time so to meet and work.

In large number classes, base groups are suggested to be the key solution as far as they are supposed to last for a semester or even more. Additionally, base groups appear to be the most suitable for complex and more difficult subject matters. Moreover, they help increase the quality and quantity of each student's performance and make them more emotionally involved in the college experience.

For base groups to work effectively, some basic aspects should be carefully taken into account. When structuring base groups, teachers should have already had an

overview of each student's current level and should also make sure that the base groups are a bit larger than the formal ones. Students, on their part, need to meet regularly inside and outside college and decide, before they meet, what tasks to deal with.

1.7. Cooperative Learning: *Academic and Socio-Affective Outcomes*

In traditional classes, the one-way communication between the teacher and his/her students makes learners unable to speak and practise language. They do not do so even with their peers as the teacher is lecturing most of the time and the assigned tasks require individual efforts. To become competent users of the language, learners need not only the linguistic competence but also the communicative competence. In fact, cooperative groups seem to be the key solution for this. The case is different with cooperative classrooms since they create environments of interaction and communication.

The relevance of cooperative goal structure in EFL classrooms lies in the fact that it enables students to have two-way communication opportunities and therefore to practise their target language knowledge. **“Research on cooperative learning, in contrast, indicates that cooperative learning provides second language learners with opportunities to hear more language and more complex language during interaction with peers”** (Tinker et al,2003: 185). When interacting with each other, students may face an input that can be complex, easy, new, and interesting; which all help in the language learning process.

Interaction with group mates, also, provides learners with comprehensible input. According to Krashen's input hypothesis, second language learners require comprehensible input that Krashen defines as messages that the learner can understand, to move from the current level of acquisition, represented by 'i', to the next level of acquisition which Krashen referred to as 'i+1'. This means that comprehensible input must contain a structure that is a little beyond the current level of understanding of the learners. It is important, here, to point at understanding as referring to the understanding of meaning rather than the understanding of form. As

stated by Krashen, second language acquisition, then, occurs through exposure to comprehensible input (Baker & Jones, 1998).

Discussions among the groups facilitate to students participating in the task and, consequently, learning more and receiving feedback about their language proficiency. Even the mistakes done in the middle of the work by one student, when being noticed by others, help in creating elaborative discussions where they correct the mistakes to their peer and strengthen their own knowledge. Additionally, cooperative tasks help in developing the four skills in language classrooms, basically the speaking and the listening skills as they are the most frequently used in the classroom. Shy and lower-ability students can no more face the difficulties of expressing themselves in front of the others, simply because talking in a group of four students can never be similar to talking in a classroom containing a large number of students. In small groups, learners can feel free and motivated to practise their language.

The past 100 years of research could identify the countless and the diverse benefits of working cooperatively. In fact, this instructional strategy is the most capable one to achieve numerous outcomes simultaneously (Johnson et al, 2000). Johnson and Johnson (1987: 14-15) mentioned that:

The importance of cooperative learning goes beyond maximizing outcomes such as achievement, positive attitudes toward subject areas, and the ability to think critically, although these are worthwhile outcomes. Cooperation is as basic to humans as the air we breathe. The ability of students to work collaboratively with others is the keystone to building and maintaining stable marriages, families, careers, friendships, and communities. Knowledge and skills are of no use if the student can not apply them in cooperative interaction with other people.

The overall body of research conducted on the outcomes of cooperative learning identified three main categories of outcomes basically: effort to achieve, interpersonal relationships, and psychological health (Johnson et al, 1991; Jolliffe, 2007).



Figure 1.1: Outcomes of Cooperation

Source: Johnson et al, 1991: 29

1.7.1. Effort to Achieve

Before answering the question: Why higher achievement is resulted from working together? It is important first to know that simply putting students in one table does not necessarily mean that higher performance will be achieved. Promoting achievement, critical thinking and positive attitudes towards the subject matter need a careful consideration of the five basic elements of cooperative learning, and which must be included in each group.

A wealth of evidence suggested that students who work in cooperative situations perform much better than students who work individualistically or competitively (Johnson et al, 1991). Additionally, Cohen (1994) stated that working in groups help students master the academic content. They both learn about the subject matter and develop the sense of critical thinking. He (ibid 15) pointed out that:

...discussion within the group promotes more frequent oral summarizing, explaining, and elaborating what one knows; cooperative learning promotes greater ability to take the perspective of others...; in the group setting, one's thinking is monitored by others and has the benefit of both the input of other people's thinking and their critical feedback.

In many classes, the dominant fact is that of the teacher being regarded as 'sage on the stage'. Students depend on the teacher in understanding the assigned academic content and even in mastering it. **"The application, evaluation, and synthesis of knowledge and other higher-level reasoning skills, however, are often neglected in college classes"** (Johnson et al, 1991: 41). However, because of the numerous cognitive strategies used in cooperative learning groups, critical thinking can be developed in college students. Student-student interaction involves discussion as a main aspect in addition to the great focus on achieving the solution to the problem-solving tasks. Explicitly teaching reasoning and critical thinking is not required; however, putting students in such cooperative situations is the key solution as far as it enables a greater use of higher-level reasoning strategies and critical thinking (ibid).

A study conducted by Bligh (1972) tells that students who had lived the cooperative experience had a positive view about the curriculum whereas those who had received information only by lecturing did not. **"Cooperative learning experiences, compared with competitive and individualistic ones, promote more positive attitudes toward the instructional experience, and more continuing motivation to learn more about the subject area being studied"** (Johnson et al, 1991: 42). Additionally, one of the assessment seminars in Harvard University (1990) has drawn the conclusion that positive attitudes towards the subject matter come from working cooperatively with classmates (ibid).

1.7.2. Interpersonal Relationships

Social-affective learning is, also, one of the advantages of cooperative learning. Cooperation enables students to create positive relationships with their peers and instructors; and benefit from the social support to better accomplish the learning goal.

Colleges, nowadays, welcome students of different nationalities, languages, social classes and competencies. No matter to what extent the classroom is multicultural, working in cooperative groups seems to be a worthy solution for maintaining relationships among classmates and reducing the feeling of being different and excluded. No matter what impressions they get when meeting each other the very first time, students start liking and caring for each other when working cooperatively. However, students who work individualistically or competitively cannot feel this way.

When positive relationships exist among students, they can feel the sense of belonging. They even feel more responsible for their own and their mates' learning; they commit more to college and success, and they try their best to increase their academic achievement and productivity. This is what Johnson *et al* (1991: 43) confirmed when saying: **“To be productive, a class of students must cohere and share a positive emotional climate”**.

Thanks to the social skills learned when working in groups, students begin to understand the real meaning of listening to, understanding, and solving problems with the others no matter they have an opponent or a proponent view. Moreover, the relationships obtained through cooperative learning last even after the class or college time. Numerous studies have shown that students, even when put in post instructional situations, keep a strong interaction with their college peers (Johnson & Johnson, 2009).

So much focus on achievement causes pressure and decreases the sense of security in students. Social support, then, has to be present among them. Cooperation ensures that learners will assist each other to successfully achieve their goals. They develop a capacity to deal appropriately with stressful and frustrating situations and they decrease anxiety. All these aspects and others are related to social support.

In their first year of college, students may not succeed to be engaged in classes and to establish social relationships with their classmates, which may be the reasons for dropping out of college. Being socially involved in classrooms is the key solution for enjoying the learning experience and successfully achieving the learning goals.

“College students report greater satisfaction with courses that allow them to engage in group discussion...” (Johnson et al, 1991: 47). Significantly, cooperative learning is a successful way to provide students with the opportunity to discuss the assigned tasks and results in retention.

Cooperative learning promotes more liking among classmates. The studies conducted in this area demonstrated that students develop a kind of positive attitudes towards each other whatever is their race, age, sex, ability, social class...etc. Moreover, working in groups seems to be the only way through which egocentrism is lost and wider perspectives are taken (ibid). Additionally, interaction among peers provides each student with the chance to meet a model in the class environment. Modeling is always said to help students in learning new behaviour and widening overviews.

Working in groups does not affect only student-student relationships, but also, teacher-student relationships. Cooperative learning enables teachers to interact with small groups rather than addressing the whole class. The teacher, then, has more opportunities to learn the students’ names and create an intimate atmosphere that can last even after the class time. **“the process of observing students work in small groups and then intervening seems to create more personal and informal interactions between the instructor and the students than do lectures and discussions involving the whole class”** (ibid 48).

1.7.3. Psychological Health

Some studies were conducted to determine to what extent is cooperative learning influential on the psychology of students. The results have demonstrated that greater psychological health is resulted from working cooperatively with classmates. Moreover, cooperation results in positive social relationships, the ability to cope with difficult situations, self-confidence, self-esteem, emotional maturity, and trusting others (Johnson & Johnson, 1987).

As far as self-esteem is a significant aspect of psychological health, around 80 studies were conducted for the sake of relatively measuring the impact of competitive, individualistic and cooperative learning on students' self-esteem. Cooperative learning is the one that appeared to promote higher self-esteem. The reason behind this lies in regarding each other as active and important in the group. **"If learners realize that their contributions are accepted in a group and even necessary and useful for the aim of the group, their self-esteem might rise"** (qtd. in Fehling, 1990: 3). Cooperative learning strengthens students' self-confidence since they feel responsible for every participant's learning. Students start appreciating themselves when they notice how worthwhile their contributions are for the success of the whole group (Johnson & Johnson, 2009).

Engaging in cooperative situations will teach students how to feel committed to their own and their peers' success and that **"...promoting the success of others is a natural way of life"** (ibid 372). Thus, through working in groups students are prepared to be good citizens.

Intrinsic motivation has been always seen as superior to extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation comes from a combination of the likelihood of success and the need for success. These two aspects take a great part in cooperative groups since every student seeks to positively contribute to the success of the whole group. Additionally, learners can be emotionally involved as they are able to express their feelings and thoughts in cooperative groups.

People, often, cannot change their view about someone if they stereotyped him/her. However, cooperative learning enables students to change their first wrong impressions about each other as they start to work cooperatively in one group. In a similar vein, Johnson and Johnson (1987: 39) added:

Students participating in cooperative learning experiences, compared with students participating in competitive and individualistic learning experiences, like the teacher better and perceive the teacher as being more supportive and accepting both academically and personally.

Cooperative learning, then, influences not only student-student relationships but also teacher-student relationships.

Researchers mentioned that each outcome of cooperative learning influences the others. Cooperative learning involves caring about each other's feelings, opinions, and learning; which in turn leads to striving more to accomplish the shared goals. Success, on the other part, can cover the academic and the social sides which all lead to a more psychological health. In brief, positive interaction among students, with a consideration of the basic elements of cooperative learning, results in successful academic achievement, positive social relationships and psychological health; and decreases shame, anger, depression and anxiety among students.

1.8. Cooperative Learning: *Selected Methods*

Researchers have identified various methods of cooperative learning over the last decades. Johnson *et al* (2000: 3) added:

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.

Teachers can integrate different methods of cooperative learning in the classroom and can innovate in the way they use them depending on the academic content and the students addressed. For this reason, it is impossible to have an exhaustive and thorough list of cooperative learning methods in this literature.

The following methods are by no means all methods of cooperative learning; instead, they represent only some ways in which cooperative learning can be structured. The selection, in fact, was based on which methods are best used in improving students' academic performance according to the numerous studies on cooperative learning methods, as well as their relevance to teaching languages.

1.8.1. Jigsaw

Jigsaw is a method developed by Elliot Aronson in 1971 and it represents one of the earliest models of cooperative learning. It is noted that “**Jigsaw is best used with students in elementary school through college...**” (Stevens, 2008: 190). This method seems to be appropriate when the learning of narrative content is desired rather than the learning of skills. Just like in a jigsaw puzzle, each learner’s contribution is an essential piece to complete the given task. Thus, each student is important to the learning of the whole group and therefore to the whole class.

In the jigsaw model, each group consists of four students including an expert in the subject area. The experts have first to meet and to discuss what content to teach to the other participants and in what way it should be taught; after that, they go back to their original groups to teach their peers (Stevens, 2008). Evaluating the students’ performance in jigsaw involves giving students grades for their individual examination.

In fact, a number of researchers have used the jigsaw method in their classrooms with different age students and different subject areas to examine to what extent it is influential and it “**...was considered effective in increasing positive educational outcomes**” (Mengduo and Xiaoling, 2010: 113). The jigsaw strategy is said to be effective for the fact that it decreases the teachers’ dominance of the learning of students as well as for how relaxed students can feel when working with such a method.

In fact, jigsaw was not the final version of working in groups in such a way. However, the set of modifications that have been applied to this method by some researchers led to the suggestion of Jigsaw 34 by Slavin (1978) which emphasized the importance of the background knowledge that students have about the task; and Jigsaw 34 by Holliday (2002) which added reviewing the knowledge gained from the collaborative work before assessing students’ performance (Mengduo and Xiaoling, 2010).

1.8.2. Student Teams-Achievement Divisions (STAD)

This method consists of some essential components including class presentations, teams, quizzes, etc. Stevens (2008: 191) added that

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 students in second through twelfth grade.

Even in STAD, groups are made of four students. In fact, it is the best used method when the teacher is about to finish an instructional unit for the sake of preparing students to a test.

Before working in groups, students sit for a pretest. The learning process starts first by the teacher's lecture. Students, then, discuss the assigned material in order to master it and to sit for another test that determines their improvement points which in turn reflect how good their performance increases. If the learners' performance meets some criteria, and if their grades are superior to those of the previous quizzes, then students will be rewarded. In fact, STAD demonstrated a great positive influence on both students' achievement and relationships.

1.8.3. Learning Together

This method is developed by David Johnson and Roger Johnson in the mid 1960s. It is based on the social interdependence theory which identifies two types of interdependence. Learning together, then, takes into consideration how caring of others' learning promotes positive interdependence among the group and how beneficial it is to the achievement of the whole class. It, also, focuses on face-to-face interaction, positive interdependence, individual accountability, and interpersonal skills (Stevens, 2008).

When using this method, groups are characterised by sharing the opinion and the materials, dividing labour, and striving to achieve the common goal and gain the group

reward. They are supposed to discuss the assigned content together and prepare each other for the individual test.

On the effect of this method, Johnson *et al* added that: “...**cooperative learning methods had a significant positive impact on student achievement..., Learning Together (LT) promoted the greatest effect...**” (2000:1). In fact, the reason behind this lies in the fact that the five basic elements of cooperative learning are carefully included which in turn affect positively the students’ achievement, relationships, and psychological health.

1.8.4. Guided Reciprocal Peer Questioning

Guided Reciprocal Peer Questioning (GRPQ) is one method of cooperative learning that is used mainly with college students and which was developed by Alison King. This method involves a brief lecture of 10 to 15 minutes before students start writing their questions individually and then moving to groups in order to ask those questions and discuss the answers.

GRPQ is a method that helps students learn narrative content like those presented in textbooks. When following this method of cooperative learning, each student asks a question about the content to a peer and the later answers it and reciprocates by asking another question. Research on this method demonstrates that it effects positively students’ learning and helps them to better grasp new knowledge (Stevens, 2008).

1.8.5. Reciprocal Teaching

This method was developed by Annamarie Palincsar. It is selected when developing the reading comprehension skills of students is desired and it is appropriate for elementary and middle school learners. In this method, groups consist of 3 to 5 students and communication between the group participants take the form of dialogues and discussions mainly to support each other’s learning.

Reciprocal teaching goes through some steps starting with explicitly explaining to students the comprehension strategies including questioning, clarifying, summarising,

and predicting; then applying them in front of the whole class. After that, the task is distributed to students in their regular setting. Classroom students discuss the task, then, they are split into groups to have a group discussion where the strategies are used in the same way as their teacher did.

Omari and Weshah contend that “...**reciprocal teaching is one of the most effective methods that develop the cognitive and the meta-cognitive processes for the students...**” (2010: 26). In fact, research on reciprocal teaching showed great results in terms of accuracy and proficiency in using the assigned comprehension strategies.

Although there are few studies that compare a cooperative learning method with another similar one, there are a lot of other studies that compare these cooperative methods with the traditional way of teaching; a significant proportion of which tells that they are influential in promoting a better learning process (Hecox, 2010).

1.9. Conclusion

As it seems to be recognised, putting students in teams does not make all what cooperative learning is. An effective application of this method requires teachers to have background knowledge of the main aspects of cooperation. In fact, this chapter is the theoretical part of this work; and which sought to summarise the main points that teachers need to know before attempting to use cooperative learning in their classrooms. It also shed light on the key-concepts used in this work. So much emphasis was put, as well, on the relevance of cooperative learning in EFL classrooms and on its positive outcomes namely students’ achievement, their relationships with their peers, and their psychological adjustment to schools.

CHAPTER TWO

Research Design and Procedures

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2.1. Introduction

Considering the vital effect that teaching methods have on our EFL learners' competence and development, the present study was conducted for the sake of examining to what extent is cooperative learning influential in enhancing the students' grammar competence. This research, in fact, is an action research that required the selection of participants, the design of the research instruments, data collection and finally data analysis.

Thus, the present chapter aims at describing the data collection procedures that the investigator dealt with along this research. It starts first by describing the setting in which the study took place; then, to identify the sample population selected for this research. Additionally, it provides the reader with a detailed description for the used tools including the teachers' interview, the learners' both pre-training and post-training tests and the learners' questionnaire; as well as how should the cooperative learning outcomes be evaluated.

2.2. The English Department: *A Brief Description*

As it is previously noticed, one of the aims of this study is to examine to what extent cooperative learning can be useful to enhance EFL learners' grammar competence. English, then, is a major that is taught at the level of the foreign languages department at Tlemcen University. In an attempt to describe this educational setting, it is a requirement to point that it was founded in 1988. Later, in 1994, this department could include two separate sections, namely French and English.

After passing their Bacalaureate exam, students can choose to study English depending on whether their average allows them to do so or not. Actually, the required average for the English major varies from one stream to another, i.e., it depends on whether students were following the stream of Life and Natural Sciences, Letters and Philosophy or Letters and Foreign Languages. Graduation from this department required students to study this major for four years in order to get the 'License Degree'; the equivalent of 'BA' in other countries' system of education.

Spending four years of studying English as a major included fulfilling courses of different subjects; namely Grammar, Written Expression, Oral Expression, Linguistics, Sociolinguistics, Reading Comprehension, Civilization , Literature, Educational Psychology and Arabic. They were also required to write an extended essay, or a pedagogical report in which they speak about the teacher training sessions that they had to undergo.

In the academic year 2010/2011, the department of foreign languages at Tlemcen University witnessed a significant change which is the inclusion of the translation section. Additionally, another fourth major, which is Spanish, was added as a major of study to the department in the same academic year. In fact, including two additional sections was not the only milestone in the development of this department; however, the English section, as well, witnessed the adoption of the 'BMD' system, the equivalent of the 'LMD' in the French literature. The following table summarises the main similarities and differences between studying English following the classic system or the new 'BMD' system in both under-graduation and post-graduation studies.

		LMD System	Classic System
Before Graduation	First qualification	License degree	License degree
	Time Spent	3 years	4 Years
	Specialism	Language Studies Literature and Civilization	
Post-graduation	Graduation	Extended essay Training sessions	Extended essay Training sessions
	Second qualification	Master	Magister
	Time Spent	2 Years	2 to 3 Years
Post-graduation	Specialism	Language Studies Literature and Civilization	Sociolinguistics - ESP - Applied Linguistics & TEFL - Educational Psychology - Literature
	Doctorat	3 years	5 Years

Table 2.1: Classic Vs BMD System

Whether speaking about the classic system or the new 'BMD' system, a great deal of emphasis was put on grammar in the process of teaching English as a major. In

both systems, over their first two years, students receive a satisfactory amount of knowledge about the needed points of the English grammar, as well as some practice sessions in which they are required to solve tasks and exercises about the grammar content taught. The table below shows the distribution of the specified hours for grammar that EFL learners receive along their graduation process.

Grammar Courses	Classic System		LMD System	
	First Year	Second Year	First Year	Second Year
	4:30 h	3 h	6 h	4:30 h

Table 2.2: Distribution of Grammar Hours per Week over the Years.

2.3. Research Participants

In any research, not only the methodology and the instrumentation determine its quality; but rather, the sample population selected as well. Accordingly, Cohen et al pointed that researchers “...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” (2000: 92). Researchers have put so much emphasis on the way the investigator selects the sample. In fact, he/she must follow a top-down process in which the total population is first identified, and then the sample is selected to better ensure its representativeness and therefore its validity (Cohen, 2000).

Significantly, there is no clear-cut answer to the question about the sample size; however, there is no wonder that the investigator should select the minimum sample that represents the population targeted. In this study, sampling included the selection

of six EFL grammar University teachers and one class of the second year which consisted of 57 EFL University students; only 38 of them were chosen for the study.

2.3.1. Participating Learners' Background and Needs Analysis

In fact, it is indispensable to start defining the selected sample population before speaking about any detail that concerns dealing or working with them. Brown (1977: 278) contended that:

One now needs to define a specific population and then to draw a reasonable sample of that population. Populations are typically defined in terms of age, sex, language proficiency level, L1 background, educational background, and perhaps occupation.

Regarding the aim of this study, this assigned sample is composed of 38 EFL students at Tlemcen University, 10 males and 28 females, rather than 57 as the group contains. The reason behind this lies in the fact that some students were absent the day of the pre-test, some were absent during some sessions of the training phase, and some others were absent the day of the post-test. Thus, the investigator excluded those students from the sample population assigned for this study and kept only those who attended the pre-test, the training phase and the post-test as well. These students belong to the same group which is one class among totally six second year classes. The students' ages range from 19 to 28; 35 of them are Arabic native speakers and Baccalaureate holders from different streams; mainly Life and Natural Sciences, Letters and Philosophy or Letters and Foreign Languages. They have been exposed to the English subject since their first year at the middle school; this makes a total number of eight years taking into account their first year at University.

In point of fact, the case is different with the three remaining students since they are Turkish native speakers coming from Turkey to study English at Tlemcen University as 'The Students Exchange Program' may allow. The 38 students have been colleagues, in the same class, since their first year at University and they have been exposed to different subjects including grammar.

The reason behind choosing specifically second year students lies in the fact that already studying together for a whole year will help reduce problems of shyness and anxiety when placing students in groups for cooperative learning activities. Another benefit of already studying English for a previous year, concerns the awareness that students gain about the importance of grammar to their learning of English. This idea has been stated by Kennedy and Bolitho (1984: 13-14) who said: “**The older a learner is, the more likely to have his own definite ideas on why he is learning English...the utility of learning English is likely to be apparent**”; and which are all some ways to ensure the validity of the research.

Numerous studies have been conducted on the role of previously deciding about students' needs (Songhori, 2008). A significant proportion of these studies determined that the learners' needs analysis is of a great essence as far as it helps teachers first identify where their students are in terms of knowledge, skills and competencies, consider what they are supposed to achieve and, therefore, better decide about the academic content that should be provided to students.

Grammar has always been the topic of several debates and its significance has always been confirmed. It is considered to be a determinant factor in the mastery of any language being learnt (Kao, 1998). Accordingly, EFL learners should be exposed to a good deal of grammar instructions in their classrooms, so to ensure that their communicative competence is being enhanced.

To better identify the students' current grammar competence including their strengths and weaknesses, and to determine what can be realistically achieved as well as the relevant academic content required, the investigator opted for a learners' needs analysis. In fact, this was realised through making students sit for a pre-training test which ideally helped the investigator in structuring the lectures that best suit the participating students.

2.3.2. Participating Teachers' Background

For this school year, 7 teachers were assigned to teach grammar to second year EFL students at Tlemcen University including the investigator. Since the study is conducted with second year students, the investigator decided to choose second year grammar teachers for this study rather than randomly selecting some grammar teachers

regardless of the level they teach. This accessible sample, then, includes 6 grammar teachers whose ages range from 29 to 42 years old.

The participating teachers are female Arabic native speakers. They are all Magister holders preparing for their 'Doctorate', the equivalent of 'PhD' in other countries' system. After obtaining their BA degree, 4 teachers were specialised in TEFL and Applied Linguistics, and the 2 remaining teachers in Sociolinguistics. Their grammar teaching experience ranges from 2 to 6 years.

2.4. Action Research

Action research (AR) seems to be a valuable way in which teachers can better understand themselves, their classrooms and their students. Before conducting an AR, it is of a great significance to have a basic knowledge about the key concepts in AR including mainly its steps and characteristics. Firstly, the hazy idea which teachers have about action research should be changed by first defining this kind of research. Generally speaking, AR is related to the idea of 'the teacher as researcher' (Burns, 2010). This process, in fact, involves self-reflecting and criticising one's own teaching. It does not mean at all that some areas in one's teaching are negative; rather, it refers to how possibly some areas can be developed positively. So, in Burns' words (2010: 2), **"...in AR, a teacher becomes an 'investigator' or explorer of his or her personal teaching context, while at the same time being one of the participants in it"**.

Again, conducting an AR does not mean that teachers are incompetent; yet, it is just an attempt to make the real situation similar, as much as possible, to the one we wish to have in classrooms. Importantly, AR specifies first a 'problematic' situation or an issue that should be treated differently than before to better develop the educational context, and **"The central idea of the *action* part of AR is to intervene in a deliberate way in the problematic situation in order to bring about changes and, even better, improvements in practice"** (Burns, 2010: 2). Indeed, neither the teacher's own assumptions, nor his/her own opinions decide what to try to develop.

Rather, the action research should be determined by what is empirically calling for the change.

Improving educational situations requires the use of 'a reflective research cycle' which involves planning, acting, observing and reflecting. Basically, AR goes through the four major previously mentioned phases.

- *Planning:* This phase includes the teacher's view about the learning situation, i.e., what issues seem to need an improvement and what improvements to be made.
- *Action:* This second phase involves putting into action what the teacher has already suggested in the plan. The teacher, then, intervenes to the situation by doing things in a different way than usual.
- *Observation:* At this stage, the teacher is involved in a systematic observation process. He mainly observes the changes, the improvements and the involved participants' attitudes towards those changes.
- *Reflection:* After the third phase, which is actually, a data collection phase, the teacher reflects on, evaluates, and describes the achieved improvements. This allows him to conduct another action research successfully and enables him to be an ideal example for those wishing to change and improve as well.

Looking at this research from an action research perspective will help one to see the different four phases taking place in this work. First, the investigator identified the problematic and set some objectives, which are highlighted in the general introduction. Additionally, she generally specified what to focus on in this action research. The second phase involved some teaching sessions in which cooperative learning was structured, i.e., students were split into groups and taught the social skills needed to deal with the task and to better achieve the mutual learning goal. The stage of observation, however, included both the collection of data described in the present chapter and the analysis of data which is the heart of the third chapter. Finally, the reflecting stage took the form of some conclusions drawn by the investigator for both working with cooperative learning in future context and to encourage EFL teachers to work with it too.

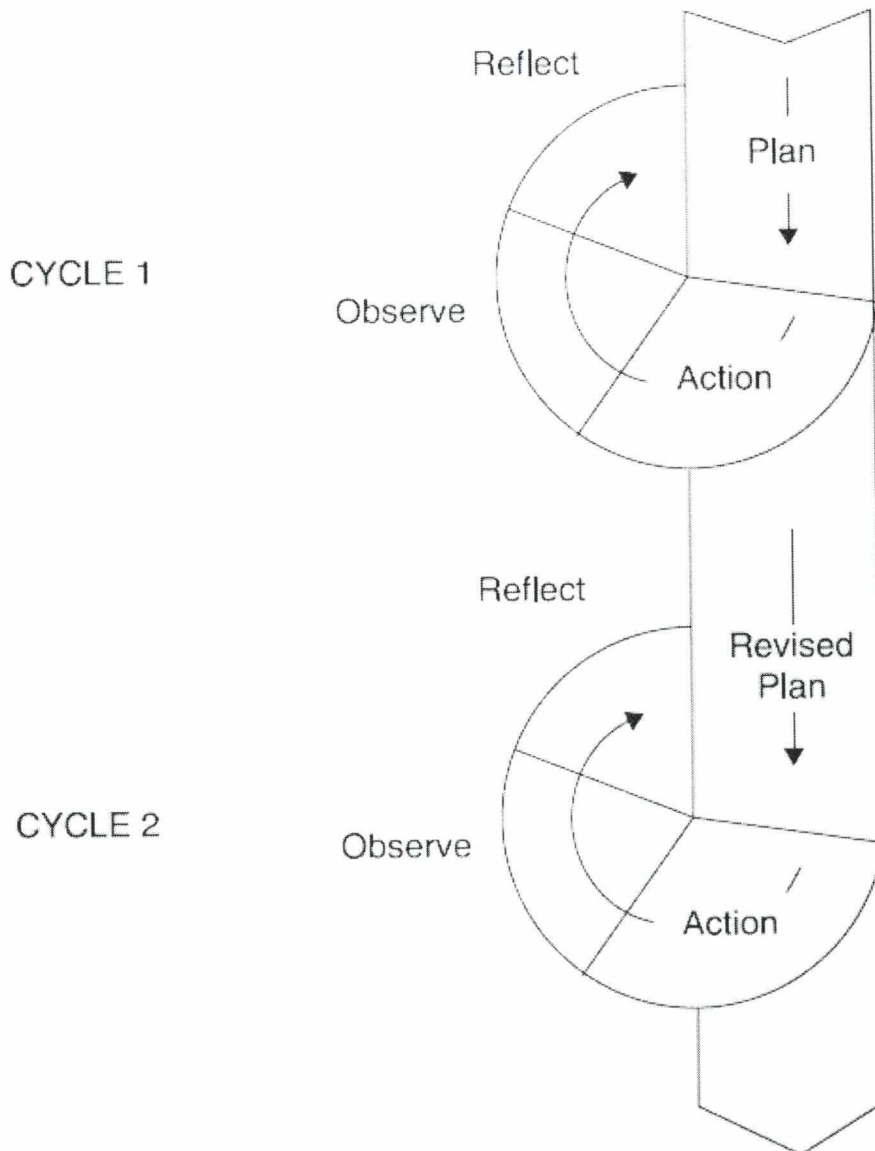


Figure 2.1: Cyclical AR model based on Kemmis and McTaggart (1988).

Source: Burns, 2010: 9

In spite of the fact that AR may seem a time-consuming and a tiring issue to many teachers, it is, in fact, a key solution for teachers who seek to be reflective and to develop as professionals.

2.5. Instrumentation: *Literature and Design*

Among the numerous available research tools, the investigator opted for the use of only a limited number of them. This is, in actual fact, determined by the nature of the research topic, the research approach, the method selected and the time limitations. On the other hand, for the purpose of ensuring the validity of the whole research work, some investigators use the multi-method approach, which is also referred to as triangulation. More precisely, triangulation refers to “...**the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of some aspects of human behaviour**” (Cohen et al, 2007: 14). It is well-meant for obtaining a rich data, and explaining the research situation from different perspectives.

In this research, the investigator opted for the use of a multi-method approach. One important situation in which qualitative and quantitative methods complement each other is when the investigator needs to describe and understand the situation on which the research is based before moving to the following stages in the development of the research process. The main techniques used in the qualitative method include interviews and observations. This is typically what the investigator chose to do in this research; the teachers’ interview was used as a primary research tool to better ensure that most EFL teachers do not make use of cooperative learning in their classrooms, and to better understand the possible reasons for this neglect (Saeidi, 2002). The learners’ tests and questionnaire, on the other hand, provided more quantitative data.

2.5.1. The Teachers’ Interview

As it can be used as a primary research instrument, the interview can also take the role of an ancillary tool for the sake of triangulating the data collected. In McDonough and McDonough’s words, “**Interviews...are just another way of asking questions, this time in face-to-face interaction**” (1997: 182). The interview is a common used research instrument in applied linguistics, sociolinguistics and investigations in second language acquisition contexts. Though it is a more sensitive research tool, the interview appears to be the preferred one in many researches because it is, in fact, more relevant if the investigator wants to take the individual differences and tone into

account. Interviews take, usually, the form of ordinary conversations and therefore help more in exchanging information.

Essentially, research on interviews demonstrates three main categories which can be classified according to their degree of formality and to what extent the interviewer wants to hold control over the participants.

Structured Interviews

The structured interview is the most formal type and it is guided by a set of questions that the interviewer has already specified. Seemingly, it is similar to the questionnaire in terms of the format and principles since the interviewer asks questions using the same words and following the same order. McDonough and McDonough added that structured interviews **“...offer practitioners a very useful tool in a number of areas, particularly when the population is small enough to make personal interviewing realistic, rather than requiring a questionnaire format”** (1997: 187).

Semi-structured Interviews

Even in this category, the overall design of the interview is structured; however, it permits more flexibility in terms of the way and the order of asking questions. In semi-structured interviews, however, only an agenda, that contains general questions about how the interview has to go, can be prepared and used (Nunan, 1992).

This type allows for richer interaction and results in more spontaneous and real answers. Besides, **“Because of its flexibility, the semi-structured interview has found favour with many researchers...”** (ibid: 149). In fact, the reasons behind this favour lie mainly in the fact that it promotes more interaction between the interviewee and the interviewer, which may in turn create a comfortable atmosphere for the interviewee so to provide a kind of rich data. Furthermore, it provides the interviewer with access to others' private lives as they express themselves freely.

Unstructured Interviews

Unstructured interviews, as well, can not include the use of predetermined questions; instead, the interviewee's view about the general topic directs the interview (Nunan, 1992). The designer puts in use only a checklist where he/she summarises an outline of the main issues desired to be discussed. As a matter of fact, it is acknowledged that unstructured interviews bring out more qualitative data to researchers.

Constructing and conducting interviews were discussed by numerous researchers. These researchers identified some practical tips that the interviewer should take into account in order to ensure the reliability of the interview. When constructing the interview, the investigator should make sure that its items reflect the established research objectives. It is true that the content of the interview differs depending on its type, the respondents addressed, the research objectives and so on; but that does not change the fact that the investigator should previously decide about the type of questions and the way in which the data has to be gathered and analysed.

After structuring the interview, the investigator should make sure that its items are relevant to the sample population he desires to work with. Thus, piloting is a required process before dealing with the subjects. In this sense, Nunan (1992: 151) states that:

Because of the potential problems in the use of the interview that we have already identified, it is very important that interview questions are piloted with a small sample of subjects before being used. This gives the researcher the opportunity to find out if the questions are yielding the kind of data required and to eliminate any questions which may be ambiguous or confusing to the interviewee.

Teachers have to carefully select the subjects taking into consideration how representative the sample is, even in small scale investigations. In this line of thought, McDonough and McDonough (1997) discussed another main issue in interviewing. They emphasised the interviewer-interviewee relationship dimension saying that the interviewer should take into consideration to what extent he/she is close to the

participants selected when formulating the questions as well as when asking them. Surely, interviewing the boss can never be the same as interviewing a student or a neighbour. The interviewer should also briefly explain to the interviewee all what concerns the interview including whether data will be collected through recording or note-taking, and whether other people will have access to the data collected or not; for how important it is to gain the interviewees' permission (Nunan, 1992).

Considering gathering data, McDonough and McDonough (1997) reported the debate on which method is best useful to record the interview data. Interviewers may follow the *Write-up after the interview* method, which is said to best record data as it allows time for the interviewer to reflect on the participants' answers. They can, as well, use the *Audio-recording* method using a tape/cassette-recorder or the *Note-taking* method which, in most cases, provides little data and distracts both the interviewer's and the interviewee's attention.

Considering all the aspects discussed above, the present teachers' interview is designed to include eleven questions divided into three main sets. The first three questions were asked in order to know more about the teaching background of the respondents. The second class of questions, however, enables teachers to describe the students' attitudes in grammar classes and the procedures teachers follow to raise their learners' interest in learning grammar. The last set of questions, on the other hand, is well-meant to check the teachers' knowledge about cooperative learning.

The investigator designed the interview using two types of question namely close-ended and open-ended questions. A closed question is, in fact, the one which includes a set of suggestions and which limits the participant to choose his/her answer from the responses proposed. By way of contrast, open ended questions enable participants to answer by themselves using their own words. Though close ended questions provide the researcher with a precise data and facilitate the process of data analysis, open ended questions may provide the investigator with more possible and insightful answers; and which in turn may help him/her to get a wider overview about the investigation. In fact, asking teachers about some aspects of their teaching experiences as well as their knowledge about cooperative learning required the use of too many

open-ended questions to give more freedom to teachers, so they can answer without feeling the limitations of the multiple-choice or the ranked questions.

Regarding the interview as **“...an interchange of views between two or more people on a topic of mutual interest...”** (Cohen et al, 2000: 267), the investigator opted for the use of a semi-structured interview for how flexible it is and for the fact that it allows more discussions between the interviewer and the interviewees. The investigator and the teachers addressed are rather colleagues at the same department; thus she did not need to structure questions that reflect a high degree of formality.

Before conducting the interview, the investigator piloted it in order to ensure its validity and omit any ambiguity which would for sure affect the data collected. This instrument was piloted to 3 teachers, and thus, some questions were omitted and others were reformulated till reaching their relevance to both the objective and the topic.

Interviewing each teacher lasted for about 15/20 minutes and the data was collected through the audio recording method using a recorder. The subjects were informed, in advance, about the purpose of the study and their consent was given in order to record their voices and use their answers.

2.5.2. Learners' Tests

A test is a widely common used research instrument which has been used for decades for the sake of covering some aspects such as personality, stress, intelligence, language proficiency and so on. Tests are known and used even in EFL contexts. On their part, Selinger and Shohamy (1989: 167) stated that tests are useful in order to **“...collect data about the subject ability and knowledge of the language in area such as vocabulary, grammar, reading metalinguistic awareness and general proficiency”**.

In constructing a test, the investigator should take into consideration the following procedures. First of all, the purpose of the test should be set and the type of the test should be determined. Also, the test items should be designed with reference to the objectives that the researcher seeks to achieve. Before making students sit for the test,

the investigator should, also, decide whether he/she will opt for the use of some oral instructions for the sake of clarifying items, or will include some written instructions within the test (Cohen et al, 2007).

Researchers should ensure the validity and reliability of the test by testing what is supposed to be tested; mainly the test should not include issues beyond the learners' current knowledge, and should, as well, be clear to students in terms of form, items included and instructions. Besides, a reliable test is the one which provides the researcher with a trusted data. Researchers highlighted the fact that the pre-test and the post-test should be different in wording, though they are both supposed to test the same content and be similar to each other in terms of the level of difficulty. In fact, it is only this way that researchers are able to **"...have at their disposal a powerful method of data collection..."** (Cohen et al, 2007: 414).

It is acknowledged that assessments aim at providing feedback and informing future teaching and learning needs. In this respect, literature on 'tests' involves the identification of several test's types. Accordingly, Johnson *et al* (1991: 69) explained that **"For cooperative learning to be successful, the learning of group members must be evaluated by a criterion-referenced system"**. The investigator, then, should previously specify a set of criteria on which testing students will be based. As demonstrated above, though the pre and the post-training tests should be different in wording and form, they should, with no doubt, be similar in objectives to better ensure the validity of the data gathered in specific and the research conducted as a whole.

Hence, the investigator decided to design both the pre and post-training tests with reference to the criterion-referenced test norms. **"A criterion-referenced test provides the researcher with information about exactly what a student has learned, what he or she can do..."** (Cohen et al, 2007: 416). This kind of test requires the learner to fulfil a precise set of criteria, and emphasises basically how well the student has achieved the learning goal; and it does not take into account neither how well the other students did, nor how many students did well. Therefore, it is based on the individual and not on the whole.

2.5.2.1. Pre-training Test

The second research instrument to be spoken about in this chapter is the learners' pre-training test. Specifying learners' needs was an essential requirement before dealing with the training phase. Thus, this pre-test aims at knowing the real current grammar competence of students; which in turn can reflect to what extent learners benefited from the previous ways of teaching grammar. Additionally, the investigator takes the learners' current level into account when presenting the new material. According to the Input Hypothesis of Krashen (1982), the input should be comprehensible and should contain a structure that is a little beyond the current level of understanding of the learners. The researcher may also benefit from this pre-test when grouping students; since cooperative groups should be heterogeneous and including students of different levels of competence (Johnson & Johnson, 1987).

EFL students receive extensive lectures of grammar during their first year at University. These lectures are mainly about Articles, English Tenses, Conditionals, Passive and Active Voice, etc. However, during their second year, they attend elaborated lectures about English tenses before dealing with new issues such as Clauses, Reported Speech and so on. Considering this, the investigator structured the pre-training test to check to what extent those students have knowledge about the English tenses, and what weaknesses they have in dealing with these significant units of the English language. Mainly, the investigator's intention behind this was to prepare grammar lectures which emphasise the unclear issues to students; and which should be deliberately explained and taught.

Students were previously informed that they would be tested on English tenses and they were given time to revise their prior knowledge. On the other hand, the test included four grammar exercises with clear written instructions. The assigned exercises were different from each other in the form and the content as well, and the use of different tenses was distributed over the four exercises. The students were asked to write their answers on the test sheet where enough space for answers was specified. The test lasted for one hour and a half, and the students' sheets were given back to the investigator for a correction and a deep analysis.

The pre-test results demonstrated the main weaknesses that second year EFL students were suffering from. Those learners had, merely, a serious problem in choosing the appropriate tense to be used; though in some cases, there has been within the task, a leading word, a previous expression, or a description for the situation that may facilitate to students the conjugation of verbs. Otherwise, some students, even if knowing which tense to be used, could not conjugate verbs writing the mere right form of the tense.

2.5.2.2. Post-training Test

The pre-training test is not the only test carried out in this research by the investigator. However, there was a post-training test which aims at checking the students' progress and how well their grammar competence enhanced after a worth time of working in groups. It is well acknowledged that if the pre-training test scores are improved in the post-training test, then the training was successful and the method used in teaching the training content was appropriate. Well-designed pre and post-training tests enable the investigator to determine what content was mastered by students and what still needs to be given more time, more focus and even what needs to be taught using different methods.

The present post-training test was designed taking into account that both pre-training and post-training tests should be structured to measure the same academic content. No matter what different words are used in designing both tests, but the researcher tried to make sure that they are almost similar to each other in terms of difficulty.

Even this test contained four grammar exercises which intended to measure the students' knowledge about English tenses and their right uses. Written instructions were included in the test to better ensure the students' understanding of the required solution for the assigned task. Just like in the pre-training test, the nature of each exercise is different from the others since the investigator made a mixture of fill in the blanks items as well as underlining the correct conjugated verb. The researcher informed the students about what they are going to be tested on and they were given

enough time to revise for the test. The test lasted for one hour and a half and test sheets were given back to the investigator for a later comparison between the pre-training test scores and the post-training test scores.

2.5.3. Learners' Questionnaire

In an attempt to define the questionnaires, Brown described them as: **“Any written instruments that present respondents with a series of questions or statements to which they are to react either by writing out their answers or selecting them among existing answers”** (qtd. in Mackey & Gass, 2005: 92). Relatively, this research instrument is popularly used in collecting data. This type of research tool enables the researcher to gather data that is reported by students about themselves including their attitudes towards their learning or one of the issues of their learning. In this sense, Nunan described the data gathered through questionnaires as being **“...more amenable to quantification”** (1992: 143).

Nunan (1992) has drawn the conclusion that a questionnaire can consist of only close ended items, only open ended items, or can be a mixture of close and open ended questions. Besides, when wording the items of the questionnaire, researchers should be careful in choosing the appropriate words. **“It is particularly important that the researchers not reveal their own attitudes through leading questions”** (ibid). Additionally, the validity of the data gathered through this research instrument is obtained if only the respondents understand the questions in terms of their format and the information required behind them.

Broadly speaking, questionnaires can be administered either individually or to a class or a group of people in situ. In fact, there is a kind of favour given by researchers to ‘in situ’ questionnaires, especially if being administered by the investigator, as far as they may provide him/her with more reliable data. This is, often, due to asking the researcher for help whenever a difficulty is faced by respondents in items’ wording or questionnaires’ format. Administering the questionnaire this way is also useful in terms of taking less time. Nevertheless, the investigator needs to follow up the absent

respondents on the day of administering the questionnaire, in order to collect their views as well.

In structuring the learners' questionnaire, the researcher made use of three types of questions: close ended, open ended, and mixed.

✓ *Close ended Questions:*

e.g. How would you describe the process of working in cooperative groups?

Disturbing

Less exciting

Exciting

Enjoyable

✓ *Open ended Questions:*

e.g. What difficulties you have found when working in cooperative groups?

.....

.....

.....

✓ *Mixed Questions:*

e.g. Being an EFL student, does EFL grammar seem important to you?

Yes

No

Why?

.....

.....

.....

In addition, the questionnaire items belong to three main categories. The first set of questions requires the participants to elicit their age, sex and native language, as far as they are determinant factors in the heterogeneity of the cooperative groups since the sample population includes three Turkish students. The following two questions,

however, attempt to check students' views about grammar and the way it used to be taught; and the last one frankly asks students whether they have experienced working in cooperative groups before or not.

In the second category of questions, the researcher attempted to know how the process of working in groups went and what have learners benefited from when cooperating with their classmates in terms of both grammar competence and social skills. On the other hand, the third set of questions aimed at checking students' attitudes towards this method by asking them mainly to describe the process of working in cooperative groups, as well citing the main difficulties encountered.

As considered worth to ensure that the wording of items is appropriate, the investigator made a try-out by distributing the questionnaire to 10 students that do not make a part of the selected sample population. Testing the questionnaire enabled the researcher to know exactly to what extent the questionnaire will provide her with the desired data (Dawson, 2009). It is worth pointing at this level that the researcher administered the questionnaire to the class of students in situ by herself to intervene whenever clarifications about questions are needed.

2.5.4. The Training Phase

The longest and one of the important stages in the action research process is the training phase. It includes what the investigator wants the learners to master and perform better. Additionally, it emphasises the points that seem to need more elaborated explanations according to the students' scores of the pre-training test. The whole training phase included lectures about English Tenses, and involved students working in groups to accomplish the assigned tasks.

The pre-training test demonstrated each student's level of grammar competence and, as well, their weaknesses which need to be focused on by the teacher when preparing the lectures. Second year EFL students are supposed to be exposed to grammar lectures; mainly about 'The Present Time', 'The Past Time', 'The Future Time' and 'Perfect Tenses'. For this reason, the investigator's role involved mainly

structuring cooperative learning so that students work in groups during this phase; select the appropriate lectures' content depending on students' current competence and needs, and also assigning appropriate tasks to be accomplished by group participants.

The training phase was made of three sub-phases; which were not similar to each other in length, content and in the number of sessions included. In fact, and regardless of the absences, all the class members were involved in the training; they were all assigned into groups to work on the tasks given. The investigator attempted to implement cooperative learning effectively and attempted also to respect all the norms discussed in literature about cooperative learning. The following is a detailed description for the training stages and the included sessions:

- **First Stage: Introducing Cooperative Learning**

Introducing cooperative learning to students is not an easy job. Though it may sound good to learners to work with their peers in the same group, some of them may not appreciate the idea as far as they are more familiar with the individualistic and the competitive approaches. Thus, it seems to be sensitive to choose the right way to deliver aspects of cooperative learning to students. Explaining the process as a whole and the five elements in specific were basic requirements to make students notice the difference between real cooperative groups and traditional team works, which students used to witness in classes from time to time.

For the sake of motivating students to work collaboratively with peers, the investigator specified two sessions. Each of them lasted for one hour and a half and the main academic content in both sessions was 'The Present Time'. The aim behind specifying two sessions for the present tenses was to make students able to see the difference between working alone and working in groups; also, to feel how pleasurable it is to share knowledge with peers and collaborate to solve the same task.

First Session

This session was divided into three parts. The first 30 minutes of the lecture were spent in explaining 'The Present Time' to students. The teacher tried to summarise the

main cases in which 'The Present Simple Tense' is used and highlighted the main contrasts between using 'The Present Simple' or 'The Present Continuous'. Students started, gradually, to be involved in the discussion since they have background knowledge about the English tenses. Later, focus was given to 'State' and 'Action' verbs which seemed to be one ideal example about the difference in use of both tenses.

The second part of the first session also took around 30 minutes, but this time each individual student was given a sheet that contained three exercises so that they practice their knowledge about the present tenses. The first one is 'a fill in the gap' exercise in which students were asked to choose both the appropriate verb and the appropriate tense for each sentence. The second exercise involves a set of sentences in which verbs are conjugated either in the simple present or in the present continuous. However, students were required to underline the correct word that suits the tense chosen. Finally, the last exercise requires students to choose the right form of the verb which best suits the meaning of the sentence (see Appendix 'D').

The teacher, then, turned to introducing cooperative learning as a method to students. Emphasis was put on how cooperative lessons are different from traditional lessons and how cooperative groups should be structured. Aspects like heterogeneity and size were explained to students. They were asked to think about whom they want to work with in the same group. Although Johnson & Johnson's "**...best advice to beginning teachers is to start with pairs or threesomes**" (1987: 47), the investigator recommended students to form groups of four participants because of the large number of learners in this class. Indeed, this does not contrast any aspect of cooperative learning as far as "**Cooperative learning groups tend to range in size from two to six**" (ibid: 46).

Second Section

The present session is complementary to the previous one. It aims at engaging students in working collaboratively on the same previous exercises on the present tenses (see Appendix 'D'). This session lasted for one hour and a half and involved discussions as a main part. In the first 20 minutes, the teacher started teaching the

social skills deliberately to students. In this sense, Johnson & Johnson confirmed that **“Students must be taught the social skills required for high quality collaboration and be motivated to use them if cooperative groups are to be productive”** (1991: 21). The teacher explained the importance of respecting each others’ opinion, and encouraged groups’ participants to intervene whenever a conflict occurs in the group.

The next step in this session involved recommending students to sit in groups of four. Students selected the groups they wanted to work in and the classmates they wanted to work with, however, the researcher informed them that some changes will occur in the structure of groups depending on the native language and the level of each student as far as these two elements can be determinant factors in structuring heterogeneous groups. Students took around 15 minutes to sit in groups and the researcher distributed sheets that contain the same exercises delt with in the first session.

Students were given only 20 minutes to solve the three exercises because they have already attempted to accomplish this task in the previous session. On the other hand, the teacher was moving around the class and advising students in groups to sit in a way that enables the teacher to have access to each group and to be near each other as it facilitates discussion among the group members. Moreover, the teacher intervened when noticing a conflict within a certain group or when students asked for assistance to accomplish the task. Johnson & Johnson highlighted this fact saying that **“Teachers should not intervene any more than is absolutely necessary in the group”** (1987: 58).

Students, then, were involved in a discussion in an attempt to correct the exercises and provide each other with a convincing explanation about choosing a certain tense rather than another. After the correction was done, the teacher started discussing with students what they liked most in working in groups and what issues made the situation uncomfortable for them. In fact, students’ opinions were necessary in order to change and develop the needed issues for a better implementation of cooperative learning.

- **Second Stage: Working in Cooperative Groups**

Basically, in this phase the teacher focused on engaging students in the real cooperative learning process. This phase included three sessions (session 3, 4, 5); each one lasted for one hour and a half. Noticeably, students worked in formal cooperative groups; this is due to the fact of working in the same group, with the same peers for the whole semester, and with a focus on the five basic elements of cooperative learning (see section 1.8.3). The following is a table which shows the distribution of grammar lectures over the three sessions.

Session	Grammar Lectures
3	The Past Time
4	The Future Time
5	The Perfect Tenses

Table 2.3: Distribution of Grammar Lectures over the Second Phase's Sessions

The three sessions are similar to each other in terms of length, the way of teaching, the way of working in groups, and the way of discussing the assigned tasks as well. Whereas, they differ in the content of the starting lecture as well as the activities. Each session was divided into three main parts, each part lasting for 30 minutes, i.e., 30 minutes for the assigned lecture, 30 minutes for working in groups on the assigned grammar activities and the remaining 30 minutes for classroom discussion; for the sake of correcting the tasks.

Third Session

After explaining the basic contrasts between the past simple and the past continuous; and after highlighting the major uses of 'used to', 'would', and the 'unfulfilled past events' in the first 30 minutes of the session, the teacher turned to engaging students in cooperative learning again, but this time to solve tasks about the simple past and the past continuous. Learners were split into the usual groups and worked with the same group participants.

The task included two activities. The first one is in the form of a text which contains mistakes in the use of the tenses used. Students, then, were required to specify those mistakes and correct them by giving the right form of the verb. On the other hand, the second activity required students to underline the correct word or phrase that best suits each sentence (see Appendix 'E'). After working for 30 minutes in cooperative groups, students turned to provide the teacher with their opinions and answers in the form of a classroom discussion.

Fourth Session

In the present session, the teacher started first by providing students with the main insights for a better and a more correct use of the 'will', 'going to', and 'the future continuous' forms. Students, then, were asked as usual to form their groups in order to start the assigned task. The sheets distributed to students involved, similarly, two activities. The first one was about rewriting the underlined verbs using either the future simple or the future continuous, however, the second one required students to match sentences with each other depending on which one best complements the meaning (see Appendix 'F'). After finishing the task, students got the right answers from their competent peers as well as their teacher. This, in fact, took the last 30 minutes of the session.

Fifth Session

As usual, the first 30 minutes were specified to explain the main rules that underlie the use of either the past perfect or the past perfect continuous, with reference to the main contrasts between the past simple and the past continuous for the seamless connection between these tenses. Additionally, the investigator explained both the present perfect and the present perfect continuous, highlighting the main time expressions associated with the present perfect including 'since', 'for', 'never', 'all my life' and so on. After that, students were engaged in cooperative working to solve the task. The first activity was about the present perfect and the present perfect continuous. Precisely it commanded students to write the sentences given in other words but keeping the same meaning. The second one, however, was about the past

perfect and the past perfect continuous; it required students to complete the sentences with appropriate verbs keeping in mind to conjugate them either in the past perfect or the past perfect continuous.

- **Third Stage: Final Revision**

The last session lasted also for one hour and a half. The teacher here, recommended students to sit in groups at the beginning of the session. The teacher's objective was to make students sit for a general revision about all what they had done before, i.e., to solve some tasks about all the English tenses taught before. This session was divided mainly into two parts. During the first hour, students discussed the assigned grammar activities and tried to answer all the questions. On the other hand, the teacher was moving around the groups to ensure that all the members were equally participating in the task. Then, in the remaining 30 minutes the teacher intended to engage all the students in a classroom discussion in an attempt to correct these activities.

The total number of the activities assigned for this revision was four. The first one aimed at testing the students' knowledge about the main differences in use between the simple present and the present continuous. However, in the second one, students were recommended to fill in the blanks with a verb that appropriately complements the meaning of the sentence without forgetting to put the verb either in the present perfect or the past simple.

To make students distinguish between the past simple and the past perfect simple, the third task was given; and it involved sentences with verbs conjugated in the past simple and the past perfect, where students had to underline the correct one according to the meaning of the sentences. Finally, the fourth exercise required students to complete some sentences which refer to the future with either 'going to' or 'the present continuous'.

2.6. Conclusion

The investigator in this research started with a brief description for the setting where this research was conducted, i.e., the English department. Then, she highlighted the main aspects that should be taken into account when choosing a sample as well as the participants' profile. Besides, the research instruments used were also given attention since the researcher summarised the whole process of designing the teachers' interview, the learners' both pre-training and post-training tests, and the learners' questionnaire.

Considering the significance of grammar to EFL learners' linguistic competence, this research aims at enhancing students' grammar competence through engaging them in a cooperative learning experience. The present chapter, then, dealt with a comprehensive description for the training phase with its major stages and sessions. This description intended to inform the reader about every step in this process; including the precised time, the order of lectures as well as the assigned activities. After training students, the following chapter seeks to analyse the data collected through the previously mentioned research tools to either confirm or disprove the research hypotheses.

CHAPTER THREE

Research Findings: Analysis and Discussion

3.1. Introduction

3.2. Quantitative and Qualitative Data: *Analysis and Interpretation*

3.3. Results of Pre-training Phase

3.3.1. Results of Teachers' Interview

3.3.2. Results of Learners' Pre-training Test

3.4. Results of Training Phase

3.5. Results of Post-training Phase

3.5.1. Results of Learners' Post-training Test

3.5.2. Results of Learners' Questionnaire

3.6. Conclusion

3.1. Introduction

It is widely acknowledged among researchers that the chapter of data analysis in a dissertation is a significant one since it represents the foundation on which the investigator will draw conclusions and provide recommendations. For this reason, the investigator attempted to present the data gathered, through the data collection procedures, in a detailed and a comprehensive manner.

Besides the data presentation, the researcher opted for both a quantitative and a qualitative data analysis. Each item of either the teachers' interview or the learners' questionnaire was analysed separately; and the learners' scores were dispersed with the aid of some graphic representations. The investigator, as well, tried to interpret the data in an attempt to test the evidence of the previously mentioned research hypotheses.

3.2. Quantitative and Qualitative Data: *Analysis and Interpretation*

Proponents of quantitative research often put emphasis on how easy is the quantitative data to be collected and how useful it is to make generalisations to other contexts (Dornyei, 2007). **“The single most important feature of quantitative research is, naturally, that is centered around numbers”** (Dornyei, 2007: 32). Moreover, quantitative data is most preferred as it can be analysed using statistical computer software. On the other hand, some limitations of the quantitative research may transpire including mainly being unable to unveil the reasons behind the studied phenomenon.

While there is a clear consensus on the aspects of quantitative research, **“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”** (qtd. in Dornyei, 2007: 35). However, there are some aspects that purely characterise the qualitative research including:

- The emergent nature of the qualitative research which makes it always open to new issues to emerge in the study.
- The data collected is changed into texts.
- Its focus on the personal experiences and viewpoints rather than facts.
- Its need for smaller samples.

As stated before, the emergent nature of qualitative research gives more opportunities to the investigator to get a kind of rich data and enhances the researcher's understanding of the whole situation. Additionally, the analysis of such a data can provide the reader with a satisfactory product rather than mere tables that summarise an endeavour of a long period. However, the qualitative data is often criticised for being easy to be influenced by the investigator's personal opinions. Besides, both proponents and opponents of the qualitative research have the same opinion regarding how much collecting and analysing such a data is a tiring and a time consuming process.

Though several terms exist in the field, the term 'mixed methods research' seems to be the most frequently preferred one. It describes the third approach in research methodology. Strauss and Corbin, when speaking about both qualitative and quantitative approaches said: **"The issue is not whether to use one form or another but rather how these might work together to foster the development of theory"** (qtd. in Dornyei, 2007: 43). Mixed methods research was defined by Dornyei (2007: 45) as:

"...some sort of a 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"

One of the considerable advantages of mixing both approaches lies in the fact that the strengths of one approach complement the weaknesses of the other. In fact, words make numbers meaningful and numbers make words specified. In addition to that, the

mixed methods approach ensures the validity of the research findings through triangulation.

From all what has been stated before, and as mentioned in the second chapter (see section 2.5), the investigator opted for a mixed methods research. The reason lies in the fact that both types of data are significant for a better understanding and a better determination about the educational situation. After finishing dealing with data collection, the next step is the data analysis. The process of data analysis aims at looking at and summarising the gathered data which will help later in validating the research hypotheses, drawing conclusions and providing recommendations.

Quantitative Analysis

The data gathered through quantitative research is generally summarised numerically. Thus, after gathering the quantitative data, the researcher turns to analyse it using 'statistics' which includes different procedures. The collected quantitative data can be either: nominal, also called categorical, ordinal or interval. In simple words, nominal data includes variables such as race and gender rather than numbers. Ordinal data is the one which is resulted from ranked questions. However, the interval data is in the form of values rather than variables; an ideal example can be the test scores. In fact, the type of the data helps in determining which statistical procedure is best appropriate to analyse this data.

In the present chapter, the investigator opted for the use of 'descriptive statistics' for it is well-meant in summarising the obtained data, as well as the t-tests as being a method of comparison. Indeed, it seems more professional to use the descriptive statistics rather than providing a thorough and an exhaustive description for all the data. Descriptive statistics are of two major categories being mainly 'measures of central tendency' and the 'measures of variability'. Measures of central tendency are namely the *mean* which represents the average of the scores, the *median* which refers to the middle point in a ranked ordered list of scores, and finally the *mode* which is the most frequently occurring value in the list of scores. On the other hand, the *standard deviation* (SD) which is one of the measures of variability; indicates how far the scores

are from the mean. If the SD is high, then the scores are far from the mean and the group is heterogeneous. If it is low, the group is, rather, homogeneous and the scores are just around the mean. Additionally, the second measure of variability is the *variance*; which is simply the square of the SD.

It is argued that the most common used descriptive statistics when dealing with scores are the standard deviation and the mean. However, the later “...**has a disadvantage, namely that extreme scores skew it considerably**” (Dornyei, 2007: 214). For this reason, the researcher used the standard deviation and the variance as well as the mean and the mode to better summarise and analyse the results.

On the other hand, the t-tests method includes two major types which are namely *Independent-samples t-tests* and *Paired-samples t-tests*. The former represents the case where the researcher is intending to compare the results obtained from two separate groups; however, the later is used for the sake of comparing two sets of results that are obtained from participants belonging to the same group; just like comparing two sets of scores gathered before and after a training or a lecture which is exactly the case of this present research (ibid).

Qualitative Analysis

When the researcher is about to analyse the qualitative data, it is useful to take into account the time and place where the data were collected, the participants as well as the content; since they all help in the process of analysis. Qualitative data analysis is precisely free from the use of any quantitative or statistical procedures. The main issue in qualitative data analysis is to try to extract the hidden meaning from such a data. Qualitative data is to be transformed into words, taking the form of texts. “**Thus, qualitative data analysis is inherently a language-based analysis**” (ibid, 243). In this respect, Lodico *et al* (2006:15) also stated that: “**Qualitative research approaches...summarize the findings primarily through narrative or verbal means**”.

It is acknowledged by researchers that the investigator can start analysing the qualitative data simultaneously as the research progresses (Dawson, 2009). The

investigator may better help him/herself by analysing the data gathered even if it is just a bit. This way, the investigator will focus better on the details rather than being distracted with too much qualitative data.

Even though it is a time-consuming stage, but the first step in analysing the qualitative data is to transform the recordings into texts. The gathered qualitative data may seem to be in a mass. The role of the investigator, then, is to try to order the opinions of the respondents in a way that is useful to uncover the needed information. Though the process of analysing qualitative data may vary depending on the situation, type of the research and the instrument used; Lodico *et al* (2006: 301-302) cited some steps through which most investigators will analyse the qualitative data. These include:

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

After analysing the data, the researcher moves to the next step which is referred to as the data interpretation. The aim behind this is to compare the results with the stated hypotheses in order to test to which extent the hypotheses are reliable. In this respect, McDonough and McDonough (1997: 151) stated that: **“Having established whether a result is significant, the researcher has to go back to the design and purpose of the research to decide what the result actually means”**.

In the present chapter, the investigator dealt with the analysis of the data by moving mainly through three stages including:

- The pre-training phase results.
- The training phase results, and
- The post-training phase results.

3.3. Results of Pre-training Phase

At this stage, the investigator sought to identify the learners' needs by making them sitting for a pre-test. Also, an interview was conducted with teachers to extract whether our EFL teachers make use of cooperative learning in the classroom. Accordingly, the following is an analysis of the data obtained from the teachers' interview and an analysis for the pre-test results.

3.3.1. Results of Teachers' Interview

The present interview was conducted with six English grammar teachers at Tlemcen University for the sake of knowing which methods they usually rely on when teaching grammar to LMD 2 students of English. This will confirm that these teachers, to a great extent, do not make use of cooperative learning in their grammar classes and unveil the reasons that prevent them from doing so; and which will all, hopefully, be a basis for some solutions and suggestions to be proposed in the next chapter. More precisely, this interview seeks, as well, to check the grammar teachers' knowledge about this method of teaching.

The first item aimed at knowing how many years of grammar teaching experience each teacher has. The teachers' answers demonstrated that their experience ranges from two to six years of teaching grammar. The following table summarises the teachers' responses:

Teacher	Years of Experience
1	2
2	3
3	3
4	4
5	5
6	6

Table 3.1: Teachers' Experience of Grammar Teaching

Teachers' responses to the second question indicated that four of them begin with lecturing students emphasising the main points and the main objectives of the lecture; moving later to practice through exercises. When talking about the way of lecturing, one teacher said that she tried once to put students in groups and then ask them to deduce the tense used and the aim behind using it. She described the process saying that "...it was not really successful...because some students just talk between each other, dealing with other subjects rather than grammar"; and the reason seemed to be being familiar with listening to the teachers' explanations and then writing what he/she dictates. The last teacher, on the other hand, claimed that she does not have a fixed method through which she teaches grammar, rather, it depends on the situation and on the level of students.

While three teachers appeared to prefer learner-centered approach, two others stated that they move through learner-centered and teacher-centered approaches depending on the situation, i.e., whether they want to direct students and save time or they want to engage students, similarly, in the learning process. In fact, another idea was suggested by another teacher; mainly, she mentioned that following a learner-centered approach means neglecting students with low abilities. Accordingly, she described her way of teaching saying that "...I just teach in a simplified way".

With regard to the fourth question, three teachers ensured that their learners are, to a great extent, passive and unwilling to learn grammar. On the other hand, the three remaining teachers confirmed that not all of the students are passive; rather, competent students are active and trying always to put their touch in the process of education, while low-ability students are most of the time passive. A number of reasons to the students' unwillingness were suggested in the teachers' responses to the present question, including mainly:

- The nature of grammar lectures which makes students feel unable to bring something new.
- Feeling confused with the English tenses.
- Studying grammar tenses again during their second year seems redundant to students, and

- The unsuitable timing assigned for grammar courses in the learners' schedule.

Noticing students working in pairs, discussing answers, asking and helping each other, and exchanging ideas led three teachers; representing half of the present participants, to say that their students prefer working cooperatively most of the time. One of these three teachers explained the fact of preferring working cooperatively as being the result of the lack of confidence they have. The remaining three teachers, however, had different views. One of them contended that learners prefer working competitively, the other said they may work competitively, cooperatively or individualistically depending on the situation; and the third one explained why students work only individualistically. This seems to her that learners prefer so because working with low-ability students can make higher-ability students tired from explaining to them all the time; also because of not always having good social relationships with their peers. She illustrated saying that *"Students can work collaboratively only with classmates whom they have a kind of intimacy with"*.

Actually, teachers mentioned some techniques that they make use of in the grammar classroom and which seemed to them a kind of innovation. The first teacher stated that she tries to give more freedom to the learners by asking them to go to the library for their own research about grammar. The following two teachers appeared to focus more on the way they present the examples by either making them reflecting the real life or in the form of jokes. Their aim behind this is to make students feel the example more; and consequently understand the grammar rule or the lecture as a whole. The fourth teacher, however, talked about only emphasising the significance of grammar to the mastery of English intending to use technology in the future; while the fifth one proposed three techniques. She mentioned that she makes use of some audio and/or visual aids; she puts students sometimes in pairs or groups to work cooperatively and she recommends them sometimes to prepare the lecture before they come to study it in the classroom. Indeed, the remaining teacher highlighted the fact that, though she uses different methods in teaching grammar, some materials are still needed for teachers to be more innovative.

None of the teachers attended a workshop, a conference or a symposium where cooperative learning was tackled. However, some of them have read about cooperative learning when dealing with research about teaching methods. More precisely, three teachers have conducted a research; even if humble, about this method of teaching while two teachers have never had any knowledge about it. The last teacher mentioned that, when reading about competency-based approach, she noticed how engaging students in the cooperative work had been suggested.

Teachers' definitions of cooperative learning were various in fact. The first respondent said that, in a cooperative learning process, students are responsible for their learning and are supposed to share knowledge with each other. This last point was also highlighted by the second teacher when she defined the cooperative experience as sharing all what we know with others. Actually, another definition seemed to be more convenient since the teacher stated that cooperative learning is **"...having students working in groups for the sake of completing a task or solving a problem"**. While one teacher mentioned the significance of more than only one endeavour in accomplishing an assigned activity, she appeared to illustrate her view with 'the plays' that some students perform in oral production courses, and which is not by any mean an ideal example for the cooperative learning process. The last given definition centers around the idea of including social strategies in the learning process like putting students in pairs or groups. Finally, only one teacher escaped from answering this question by saying "No idea".

Three teachers, representing 50% of the present sample population could express nothing when being asked about how cooperative learning can be structured in the classroom. On the other hand, one teacher said that it is no more than just giving the task to students to accomplish it either alone or in groups. Then, only two teachers tackled the main points in structuring cooperation in the classroom including dividing students in pairs or groups, giving them a task to accomplish, and moving around groups to check how they progress in work in relation to the limited time precised for the task.

Precisely, the last question was opened for teachers to express their view points on why most EFL teachers do not make use of cooperative learning in their classrooms. All teachers participated in the suggestion of some reasons which mainly included that:

- Teachers' suggestions may not be taken into consideration by the administration.
- Teachers' fear of the change which leads them in most cases to keep the traditional way of teaching.
- Feeling bored from putting students in cooperative groups.
- Being unsure of the results that would be obtained from working cooperatively.
- Avoiding discussions that are out of the grammar exercises.
- Avoiding making students familiar with working cooperatively so they depend on themselves during exams and do not think of cheating.
- The teachers' lack of knowledge about cooperative learning.
- Avoiding the mess and the noise resulted from assigning students into groups.
- Teachers' worry that students may not be responsive to such a new method.

Data Interpretation

The results obtained from the teachers' interview denotes that, though their experience ranges from two to six years, teachers keep teaching grammar following a usual way of lecturing and putting students later in practice. Even though one teacher tried to change the way she teaches grammar, her students seemed to resist the change. Besides, in spite of the fact that most teachers prefer the learner-centered approach, their ways of engaging students more in the learning process appear to be still traditional; being mainly asking students to do more efforts or using some information and communication technologies.

Teachers' responses to questions two and six demonstrated that most grammar teachers do not make use of cooperative learning in their classrooms which clearly confirms the first hypothesis of this research. More precisely, their responses to questions nine and ten ensure to the investigator that the assigned teachers for the

present study have little; not to say any knowledge, about cooperative learning. In actual fact, this is one of the reasons why this method is often neglected. Other reasons include doing little research about the teaching methods, teachers' fear of the possible noise as well as learners' resistance to such a new method of teaching.

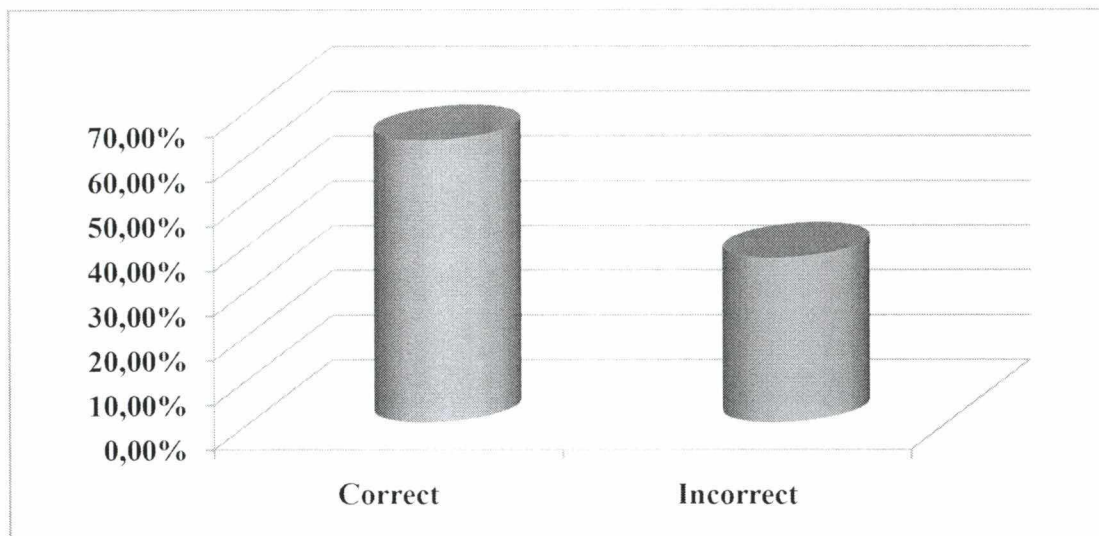
3.3.2. Results of Learners' Pre-training Test

The investigator opted for a pre-training test which aimed at determining the learners' actual level in grammar. By doing so, the researcher had a full image about where and how to place students in cooperative learning; since the process requires heterogeneous groups for successful results. The pre-test was, also, a way of specifying the learners' needs. This helped in deciding what points should be deliberately tackled both when lecturing and when assigning students to work collaboratively for an appropriate and a successful training.

As mentioned in the second chapter, the pre-training test was basically a criteria-referenced test. The researcher sought to know to which extent students can achieve the following criteria:

- The use of the appropriate tense, and
- The right form of the verb.

The test was composed of four exercises; each one includes the use of one or two tenses. Learners' results in the pre-training test demonstrated that students have serious problems regarding the choice of the appropriate tense. Each student has mistaken, in a way or in another, in choosing the required tense in some examples. Additionally, 36.84% of the student participants, being mainly fourteen students, had difficulties in providing the right form of the verb. These include, precisely, the mere 's' of the third person singular, the past simple as well as the past participle of the irregular verbs. The following bar-graph illustrates the students' production of the second criterion:



Bar-Graph 3.1: Students' Production of the Verbs' Forms.

The pre-training test was composed of four activities including forty items. The investigator evaluated the learners' performance by giving half a point for each correct item; thus, the possible range of scores was supposed to be from 0 to 20 points. In fact, the case was a bit different with the first and the fourth activity where the investigator assigned 0.25 point for the correct choice of the appropriate verb even if the tense and/or the form of the verb are wrong. The following table shows the learners' scores in the pre-training test:

Students	Pre-test Scores
S 1	02
S 2	03.5
S 3	05.5
S 4	03.75
S 5	05.5
S 6	06
S 7	06
S 8	06.25
S 9	06.25
S 10	06.25
S 11	06.5
S 12	06.75
S 13	07
S 14	07.25
S 15	07.25
S 16	07.25
S 17	07.75
S 18	08
S 19	09
S 20	09.25

S 21	09.25
S 22	09.25
S 23	09.25
S 24	09.75
S 25	10
S 26	10.5
S 27	11
S 28	11
S 29	11.25
S 30	11.5
S 31	11.5
S 32	11.75
S 33	12.25
S 34	12.75
S 35	13.25
S 36	13.5
S 37	15.25
S 38	15.5

Table 3.2: Learners' Pre-training Test Scores.

For the sake of analysing the abundant data gathered from the pre-training test, the researcher tried first to summarise the data in another table using the descriptive statistics mentioned before (see section 3.2).

Measures of Central Tendency		Measures of Variability	
Mean	Mode	Variance	S.D
8.83	6	10.24	3.2

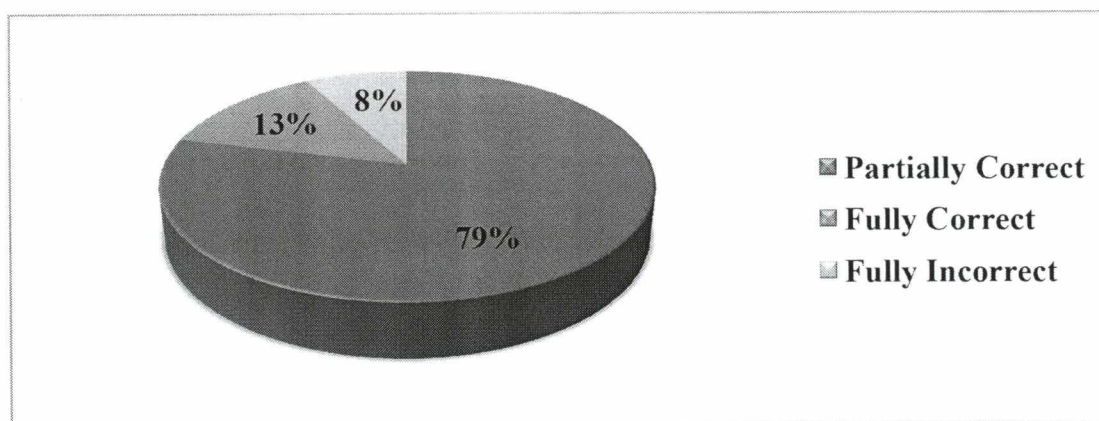
Table 3.3: Summary of the Learners' Pre-training Test Scores.

From the table above, one can notice that the most frequently repeated score in the group was six. Additionally, the mean of the group scores was 8,83. Taking into account the supposed to be the highest score, i.e., 20, both measures of central tendency refer to how low the students' achievement was in the pre-training test. On the other hand, it is worth reiterating that S.D; if being low, designates the proximity of the scores to the mean, however, it indicates that scores are distributed far from the mean of the group if it is high. To put it differently, a low S.D refers to the fact of having a homogeneous group and vice versa. In this study, the S.D of the pre-training test scores was 3.2; besides, the learners' scores ranged from 2 to 15,5. Accordingly, the investigator could determine that the present group of students is by far a

heterogeneous group since their scores were far from each other and far from the mean as well.

From a micro level analysis perspective, the researcher went further to analyse and describe the students' performance in each activity of the pre-training test. The aim behind this is, in fact, to look at the students' weaknesses and to compare the results later with the post-test performance to examine the effectiveness of the training phase.

Starting with the first activity, students were asked to complete the dialogue with one of the given verbs without forgetting to conjugate them first in the appropriate tense. This activity was selected for the sake of examining to which extent students are skillful in distinguishing between the main uses of the past time and the perfect tenses. Their responses to this activity demonstrated that these learners need a focus on these issues during the training phase as far as only five of them answered correctly the ten items. On the other hand, three students could not answer any item while the remaining thirty students' responses were partially correct. The following pie-chart better clarifies the results:



Pie-Chart 3.1: Students' Responses to the First Activity.

Although the present time is repeated each year along their process of studying English from the middle school to their second year at University; and though provided with a kind of multiple choice sentences, some students still faced difficulties in choosing the appropriate conjugated verb that better suits the meaning of each sentence. Only four students could answer the whole ten items, however, the other

students' mistaken items ranged from one to seven items. The following table clarifies the obtained data about students' mistakes in the second activity:

N° of Students	Mistaken Items
2	1
10	2
9	3
9	4
1	5
2	6
1	7

Table 3.4: Students' Mistaken Responses to the Second Activity Items

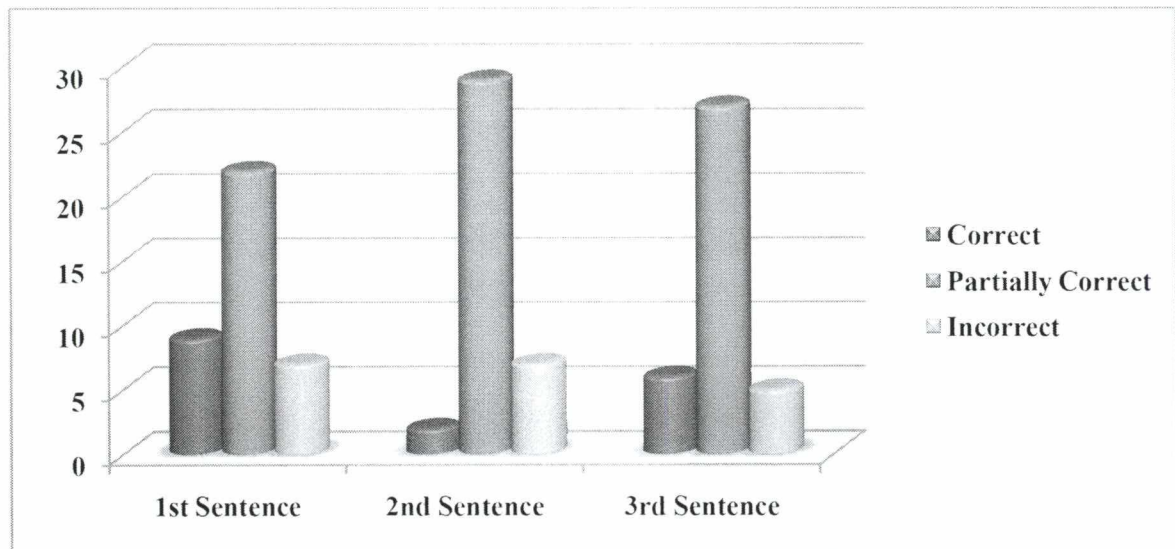
Regarding the third activity, all what students had to do was to use the word given in structuring a sentence that would be similar in meaning to the first one. The activity included nine items; all about the future time. None of the students answered the whole activity correctly, and noone provided nine incorrect responses. However, all the provided answers to the third activity were partially correct.

For the last two assigned tenses, an activity of three main sentences was given to students to fill the gaps with one of the provided verbs after deciding what tense suits the meaning more, i.e. the past simple or the past continuous. Regarding this activity, the investigator analysed each sentence separately. The following table, therefore, summarises the results obtained in each sentence:

	1 st Sentence			2 nd Sentence			3 rd Sentence		
	C	P	I	C	P	I	C	P	I
N° of Students	9	22	7	2	29	7	6	27	5
C: Correct P: Partially Correct I: Incorrect									

Table 3.5: Students' Responses to the Fourth Activity.

Here it is a graphic representation that clarifies better the learners' results of the fourth activity:



Bar-Graph 3.2: Summary of Students' Responses to the Fourth Activity

Data Interpretation

Both the description and the analysis of the pre-training test results demonstrated that though students were exposed to a great deal of grammar tenses in the previous years, they still face difficulties in mere issues such as forms of conjugated verbs, past and past participle of irregular verbs in addition to spelling.

The test scores were of a great significance in inspiring the investigator about how groups should be structured. They were taken into account in forming heterogeneous groups. The researcher could ensure, then, that some students would help in transmitting knowledge to their peers mainly by explaining to them during the group work.

3.4. Results of Training Phase

Taking into account the hypothesis stated at the onset of this work; and which suggested that working in cooperative learning will enhance the learners' grammar competence, training was conducted with learners for the sake of making them benefit

as much as possible from interacting with peers. The training phase included six sessions, each focusing on a different issue.

The first session was a basic session since the present time was introduced to students following the usual way of lecturing. The aim behind this was to make them notice the difference between understanding the teachers' explanations and the classmates' explanations when working in cooperative groups in later sessions. The second session, on the other hand, tackled the same content, i.e., the present tenses; but this time students were asked to form and work in groups. The investigator, when moving around tables, noticed some groups working in a comfortable manner; these were groups that contain friends who already have a good relationship with each other. In a way of contrast, some groups, mainly two, were facing some conflicts because of having different opinions.

The researcher intervened to calm down students who were harshly defending their points of view saying that learning will take place and good relationships will be built only if we respect each others' views. Also, the teacher sought to remind students with the basic elements and the basic roles that should be available in each group.

The discussion in the second session intended to bring out the students' opinions about what they liked or disliked most when working in groups. Students highlighted mainly the conflicts caused by having different opinions; and mentioned learning new issues as the basic enjoyable thing in the process. Hence, the teacher took into consideration all the students' views for a successful structuring of groups in the following session as well as for an enjoyable and a beneficial process as a whole.

Students, later, worked cooperatively after being informed about their should-to-be groups. This lasted for three sessions. Meanwhile, the investigator was interested in noticing the earnest issues that should be reiterated to students. These include respecting each others' views as being indispensable in achieving the common goal. Besides, groups' members who seemed to understand how cooperation should be, were always appreciated in front of their peers. In fact, it was little wonder that this may encourage them more to keep working hard and may motivate their classmates to

do so. Actually, the process remained the same till reaching the last session where a general revision was provided to students.

Looking at the whole experience may make one remembers the first students' reaction when being informed about the new way of teaching grammar, i.e., the cooperative learning method, and how it gradually changed along the process. Students seemed to start liking working in cooperative groups and some students' level seemed to be raised up. In this respect, the post-training results including both the learners' post-test and questionnaire determine whether the learners' grammar competence has been enhanced and whether they enjoyed the experience or not.

3.5. Results of Post-training Phase

At this level, the investigator will analyse the data gathered through the research instruments that were conducted just after the training phase had been done. These include the learners' post training test and the learners' questionnaire; to evaluate both the participating learners' educational and psychological outcomes, i.e. to examine to which extent cooperative learning was beneficial to the concerned students.

3.5.1. Results of Learners' Post-training Test

As mentioned before, the present test sought to evaluate the learners' grammar competence after being trained to work in cooperative groups. The investigator tried to make the test similar to the pre-training test in terms of difficulty. Additionally, both tests hold the same criteria and include four activities though the wording may be different. Similarly, this test included forty items and the investigator specified half a point for each correct item. However, in the second activity, students were given 0.25 point for providing the appropriate verb and 0.25 point for conjugating it correctly. The possible scores in the post-training test could range from 0 to 20 points. The following table provides the reader with the learners' post-test scores:

Student	Pre-test Scores
S 1	10.75
S 2	11.5
S 3	11.75
S 4	12.75
S 5	11
S 6	11.75
S 7	11.25
S 8	11
S 9	11.75
S 10	11
S 11	14
S 12	10
S 13	10.25
S 14	11.25
S 15	09.5
S 16	12.5
S 17	11.25
S 18	11.5
S 19	13.75
S 20	13.25
S 21	08
S 22	11
S 23	11.5
S 24	13.75
S 25	14
S 26	11.25
S 27	14.5
S 28	13
S 29	10.5
S 30	10.5
S 31	12
S 32	13.75
S 33	13
S 34	14
S 35	13.5
S 36	13.5
S 37	17
S 38	16

Table 3.6: Learners' Post-training Test Scores.

The data obtained from the post-training test were also described and summarised in the table below using the mean, the mode, the variance, and the S.D.

Measures of Central Tendency		Measures of Variability	
Mean	Mode	Variance	S.D
12.17	11	3.16	1.77

Table 3.7: Summary of the Learners' Post-training Test Scores.

The measures of central tendency used to summarise the learners' scores in the post-test denote that the most frequently repeated score is 11. Furthermore, the mean of the group scores this time is 12,17. Both values are higher than the values of the pre-training test's mean and mode. In this line of thought, one may consider that the training phase was successful and that working cooperatively with peers was positively influential. On the other hand, comparing the variance and the S.D obtained from the scores of the pre-test to those obtained from the post-test ensures that the second values of the variance and the S.D are lower. Thus, the learners' scores are not far from the mean which indicates having a more homogeneous group and a better achievement after training.

Another method in statistics, and which can be used to analyse better the learners' scores, is the comparison or the *t-tests* procedure. The reason behind dealing with the scores in such a way is that observing two sets of scores is not sufficient to determine the real difference between them. The *t-test* formula helps in generalising the results; however, there are two types of *t-tests*:

- *Independent-samples t-tests*: this type is used when the researcher is about to compare scores of two different groups.
- *Paired-samples t-tests*: this type is used to compare two sets of scores that are gained from participants of the same group like comparing pre-test's and post-test's scores (Dornyei, 2007).

In the present research, the investigator carried out a paired-samples t-tests to compare the students' scores of both the pre-training and the post-training tests; and thus the following formula was applied:

$$t = \frac{\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2}{\sqrt{\frac{Var1}{N1} + \frac{Var2}{N2}}}$$

\bar{x}_1 stands for the mean of the pre-test scores.

\bar{x}_2 stands for the mean of the post-test scores.

Var1 stands for the variance of the pre-test scores.

Var2 stands for the variance of the post-test scores.

N stands for the number of students.

$$t = \frac{8.83 - 12.17}{\sqrt{\frac{10.24}{38} + \frac{3.16}{38}}}$$

$$t = \frac{-3}{\sqrt{0.269+0.083}}$$

$$t = \frac{-3}{\sqrt{0.352}}$$

$$t = \frac{-3}{0.593}$$

$$t = -5.05$$

As it is obvious from the value above, the *t-tests* result is a negative value, and which indicates that the learners' scores of the pre-test are lower than the ones of the post-test. Clearly, it shows how better the students' performance is after the training phase and how successful the training was.

To better examine the effectiveness of working in collaborative groups on students' academic achievement, the investigator opted for the use of the *Eta Squared* following the formula below:

$$Eta\ Squared = \frac{t^2}{t^2 + (N-1)} = \frac{(-5.05)^2}{(-5.05)^2 + (38-1)} = \frac{25.50}{62.50}$$

$$Eta\ Squared = 0.40$$

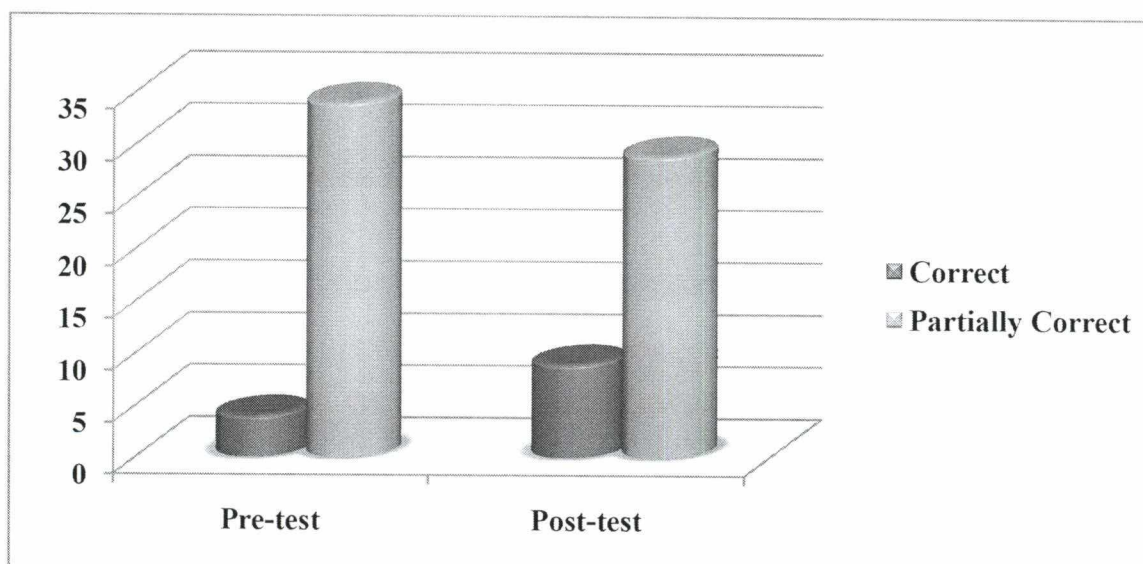
Dornyei mentioned that “**The usual interpretation of eta squared is that .01= small effect, .06= moderate effect, and .14= large effect...**” (2007: 217). Bearing in mind that the eta squared value is 0.40, it is appropriate then to contend that the independent variable which refers to working in cooperative groups was effective and that the learners' grammar competence has been enhanced.

Following the same way of analysing the students' responses to the pre-test activities, the investigator took into consideration both performances in the pre and the post tests in a comparative study to unveil how students' grammar competence

increased after making students work collaboratively during the training phase. Thus, the following is a micro analysis for each activity's responses.

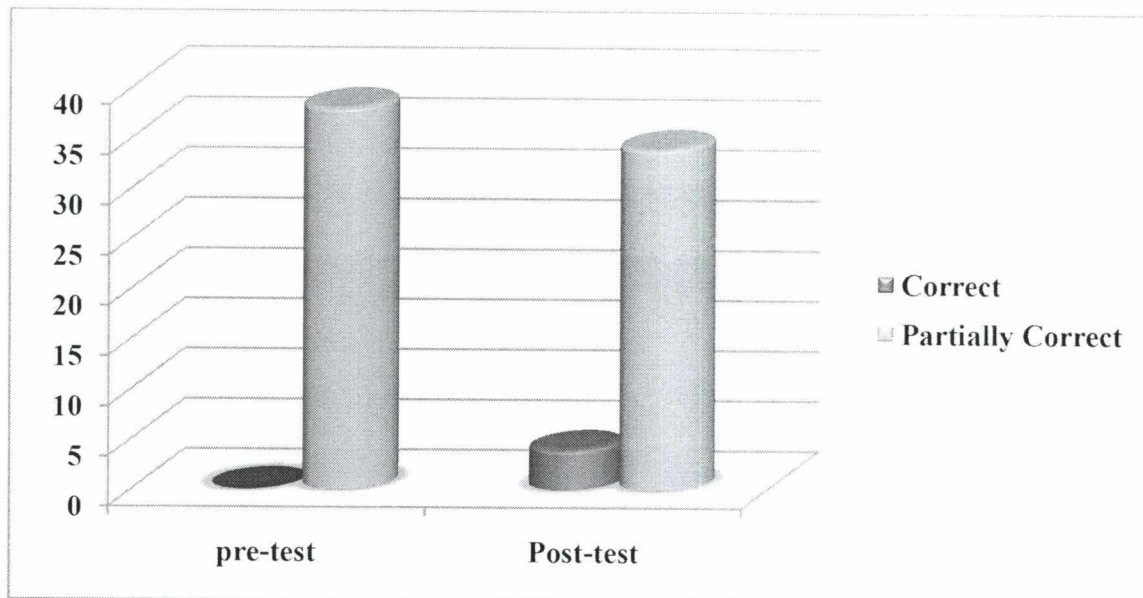
Regarding the past and the perfect times, students were also given an activity to solve in the post-test. This activity recommended students to underline the correct conjugated verb, to examine whether the focus on differences between the main uses of the past time and those of the perfect tenses was powerful. The activity included eight items, and half a point was given to each correct item. Thus, the possible scores for this activity were supposed to range from 0 to 4 points. Surprisingly, none of the students answered the whole activity wrongly, rather, all the students' scores ranged from two to three and a half points. Precisely, this reflects the reasonable progress that students achieved after the training phase.

With respect to the second activity which was about the present time, students were required to complete the sentences with an appropriate verb after conjugating it either in the present simple or in the present continuous. In the pre-training test, only four students could answer the whole activity correctly; however, a noticeable progress was witnessed after the training; this concerns mainly the fact that nine students answered the present time activity correctly in the post-test. The following is a graphic representation for the progress:



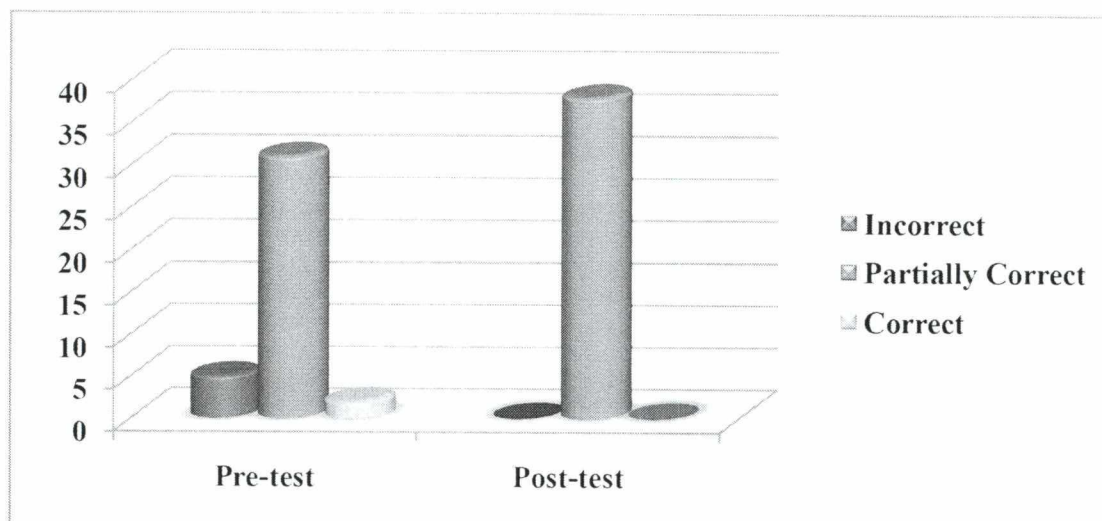
Bar-Graph 3.3: Students' Present Tenses Performance in Pre and Post-tests

Similarly, the third activity of the post-test was all about the future time. Students were supposed to provide the correct form of the verb between brackets. While no one could provide a full correct performance in the third activity of the pre-test, four students correctly answered the whole activity in the post-test; conversely, the remaining ones' performances were partially correct. The following bar-graph represents the difference between pre and post-tests' third activity answers:



Bar-Graph 3.4: Students' Performances of the Future Time in the pre and post-test

From table 3.5, one can determine that five students incorrectly answered the whole fourth activity of the pre-training test. Truly, the case was different with the fourth activity of the post-test. Students were asked to underline the correct phrase or verb in each sentence to express the past time appropriately. Accordingly, all the students' responses were partially correct which indicates a kind of progress for the five concerned students. On the other hand, though two students answered correctly during the pre-test, their responses in the post-test were partially correct. The reason behind this may be the difference in wording or the format of the activity, being absent during the session specified for the past time, or simply being not ready for the exam. However, it is not convenient to determine that the training phase was not successful for these two students as far as numerous variables play a vital role in the performance of students. The following bar-graph better displays the results:



Bar-Graph 3.5: Students' Performances of the Past Time in the pre and post-test

Data interpretation

The learners' post-test results are just a detailed way to confirm the second hypothesis stated at the onset of this work. It is acceptable, then, to determine that the training phase was successful and that working in cooperative groups is influential. Students' grammar competence has been enhanced after working cooperatively with peers; as it is shown first by their scores in both tests as well as their performances in each activity of both the pre and post-test.

3.5.2. Results of Learners' Questionnaire

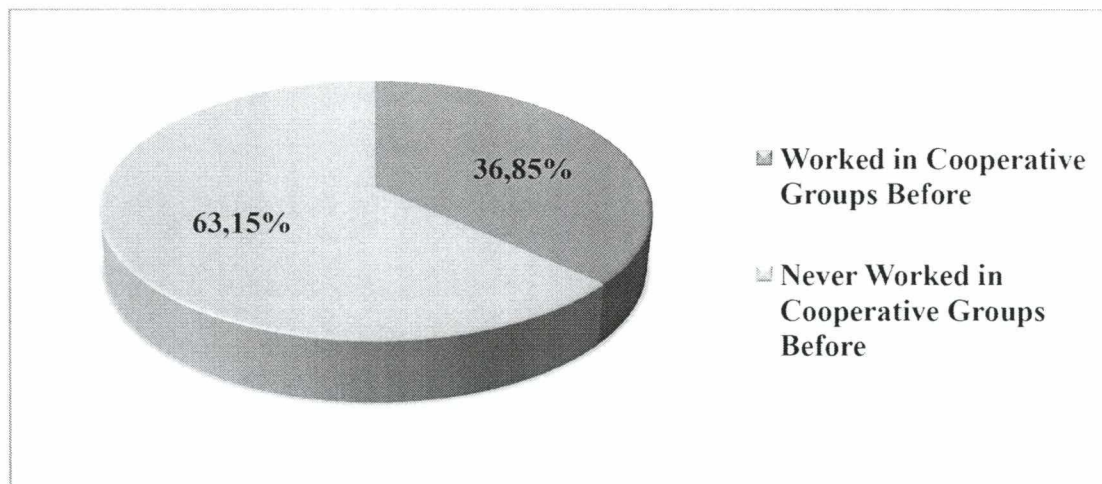
The questionnaire was submitted to thirty eight LMD students of English at Tlemcen University for the sake of unveiling some data about how students used to consider and learn the English grammar as well as what attitudes they have about cooperative learning as a teaching method; after they tried to work with their peers in cooperative groups. In fact, this was employed to test the research questions and hypotheses.

As far as the learners' opinion about the significance of grammar to their learning of English is concerned, all students agreed that grammar is an important issue in their English learning process. They illustrated their answers by mentioning some reasons. Precisely, the most common answer was about the role that grammar plays in

producing correct answers. Another common reason concerns, in fact, how necessary is grammar for both good written and oral productions. Other students' answers include describing grammar as a needed element in the mastery of a language. Moreover, one student stated that grammar is the backbone of language learning.

Regarding the second question, students were asked to describe how they have been taught grammar during the past years. Nineteen among the selected students (i.e., 50%) claimed that lectures of grammar used to go through a process of, first, explaining to them the lectures with reference to some examples; then, asking them to individually solve the exercises given. Those exercises used to be, finally, corrected either by assigning each student to correct a certain item or through a classroom discussion where only the competent students participate. Some students complained that they had problems in understanding grammar lectures because teachers were not including examples from the real life; and which may better clarify the rule. Moreover, four students complained that the learning of grammar is a complicated process since not all teachers give attention to practice as much as they give it to theoretically explaining the rules. Other four students mentioned that teachers do not include examples from the daily life and do not make use of technology in grammar classrooms; which all make the learning of grammar boring.

When being asked about whether they have worked in cooperative groups before or not, 63,15% of the participating students; i.e., twenty four students, contended that they have not experienced working in groups before. In contrast, the remaining fourteen students explained in which context and when they have worked cooperatively. Two of them mentioned that the experience took place in the middle school, seven others highlighted writing collaborative paragraphs in the high school, one student considered presenting a play in the oral production module as a cooperative work and the four remaining students see the groups in which they revise for exams as cooperative groups. The following Pie-Chart better shows the results:



Pie-Chart 3.2: Students' Previous Experience with Cooperative Groups.

Students' answers to the fourth question demonstrated that most of them prefer the teachers' explanations. More precisely, twenty three students consider the teachers' explanations as being clearer than those of their classmates. On the other hand, thirty students, representing 78,95% of the participating students, answered the fifth question saying that all the group members involved in a discussion when trying to work in cooperative groups this year. By way of contrast, four students claimed that they were explaining to their peers in the group and four others admitted that they did not participate in explanations but their group mates were explaining to them.

Asking students about how they consider their level in grammar after they had worked in cooperative groups led thirty students, representing 78,95% from the selected ones, to use the word 'better' in order to describe their level. These students seemed to agree that their level in grammar has been improved as far as they learnt many new things and they came to avoid many usual mistakes thanks to discussing and working with their peers. Furthermore, they argued that their understanding of the grammar rules has been increased because being socially close to each other made the process of explaining to lower-ability students easy. On the other hand, one student did not answer this question and the rest seven students mentioned that their level has been remained the same. One participant explained the fact of keeping the same level by saying "I think that I am good at grammar" and another by saying "I prefer to work alone".

Concerning the skills that students have learnt in the cooperative learning process, they specified some by ticking the appropriate box (es). The following table summarises the results:

N ^o Skills	The sense of leadership and responsibility	Caring about others' learning	Accepting different view points	Solving group conflicts	Trusting others
S 1	*	*		*	
S 2		*			
S 3	*		*		
S 4		*		*	
S 5		*	*	*	
S 6			*		
S 7			*		
S 8		*	*		
S 9			*		
S 10		*	*		*
S 11			*		
S 12			*		
S 13	*		*		*
S 14		*	*		
S 15		*	*		
S 16			*		
S 17			*	*	
S 18			*		*
S 19	*	*	*	*	
S 20		*	*	*	*
S 21			*		
S 22	*	*	*	*	
S 23	*	*	*	*	*

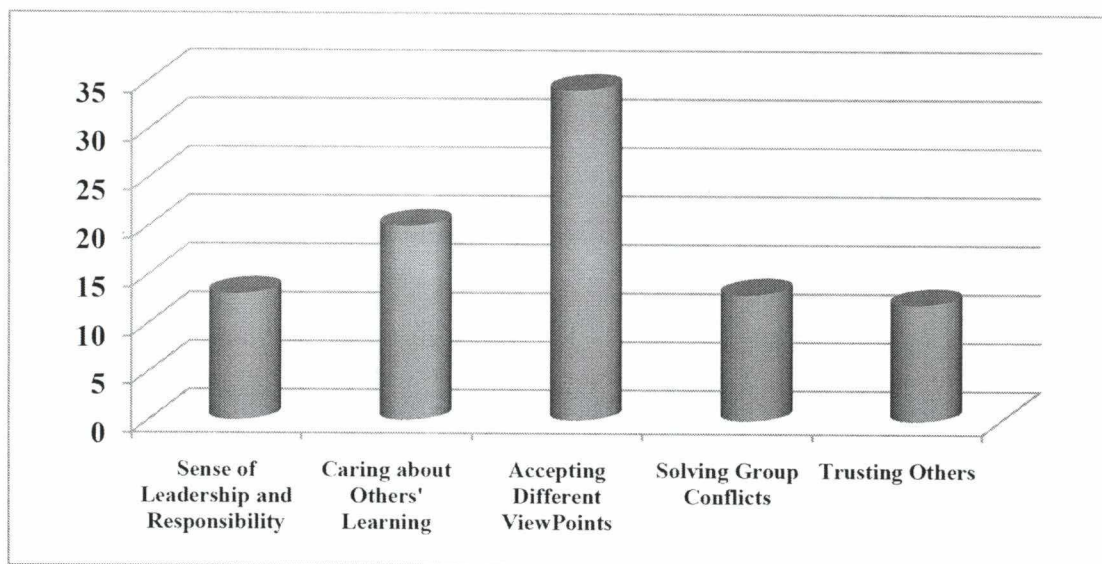
S 24		*	*		
S 25		*	*	*	
S 26			*		*
S 27			*	*	*
S 28			*		
S 29	*	*	*	*	*
S 30	*		*	*	
S 31	*		*		
S 32	*		*		
S 33		*	*		
S 34	*	*			*
S 35			*		*
S 36		*	*	*	
S 37	*	*	*		
S 38	*	*	*		

S: Student

*: Learnt Skill

Table 3.8: Learnt Skills in Cooperative Groups.

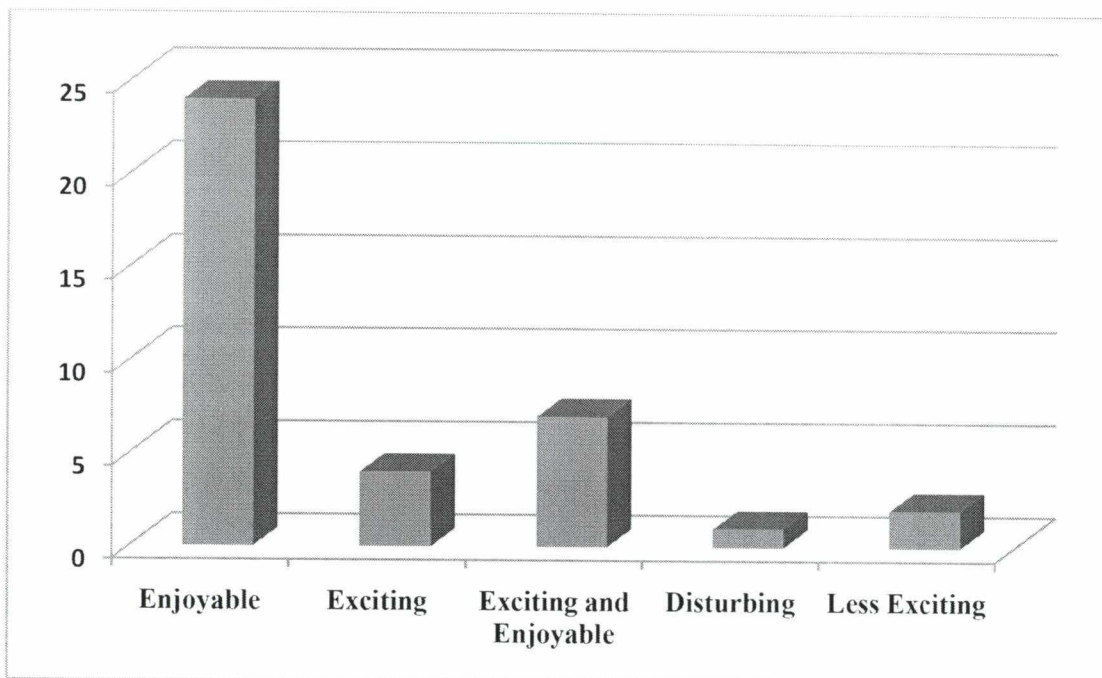
The following Bar-Graph better exposes the most common learnt skills:



Bar-Graph 3.6: Learnt Skills in Cooperative Groups.

The results obtained show that the most common learnt skills are mainly “accepting different viewpoints” and “caring about others’ learning” which is a principal aspect in cooperative learning. Whereas, the remaining skills were partially acquired.

In a similar vein, students were asked to tick one box which most nearly reflects their opinion about the cooperative learning process. In fact, a great number of the present research participants, mainly twenty four students, described the cooperative experience as being enjoyable. Four others said that the process had been exciting; however, seven students used both terms ‘exciting’ and ‘enjoyable’ to talk about their experience in cooperative groups. In a way of contrast, one student said that the process had been disturbing and two others described it as being less exciting. The obtained results are displayed, as well, in the following Bar-Graph:



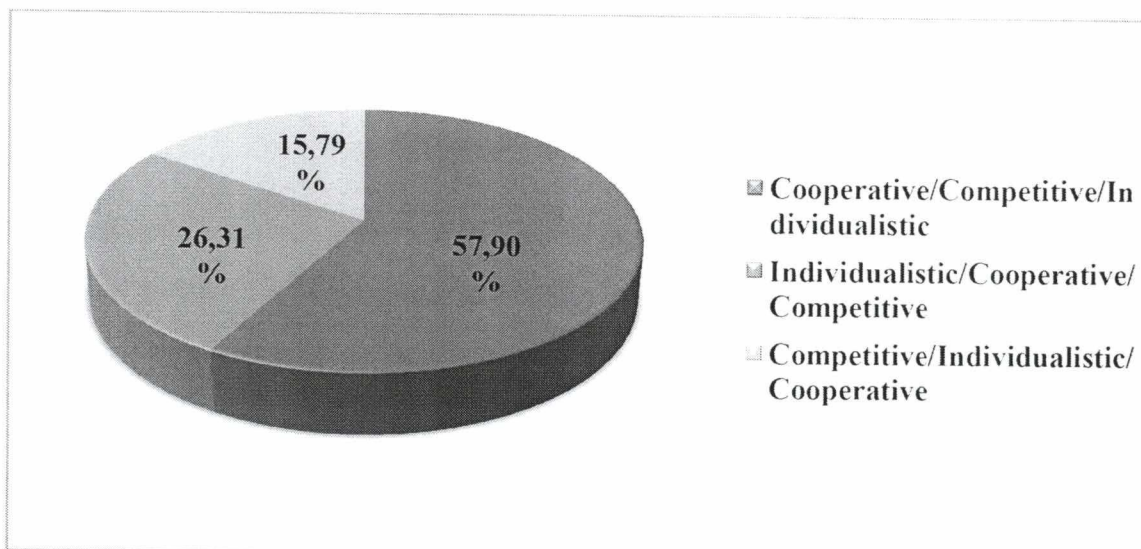
Bar-Graph 3.7: Learners' View about the Cooperative Learning Process.

Regarding the ninth question, students were supposed to cite some difficulties that they have faced when working with classmates in cooperative groups. The main mentioned reason among students' answers, specifically sixteen ones, was having different viewpoints in the group and which are in turn difficult to be all accepted. Seven other students agreed on how difficult it was to engage every student in the collaborative work, especially those who were not interested in learning grammar or in

sharing knowledge and materials with their peers. The rest of student participants mentioned some additional hardships that were also disturbing in the process of working cooperatively. These include:

- Disagreements among group participants.
- Noise due to group discussions.
- Neglecting some students' viewpoints because of their low competence in grammar.
- Difficulties in understanding some classmates' explanations.
- Difficulties in making lower-ability students understand.
- Feeling shame of not participating too much in the group discussions because of the low level, and
- Selfishness that higher-ability students may show in the group.

Being members in cooperative groups for a period of time enables students to see the difference between the three patterns of students' interaction: cooperative, individualistic or competitive learning. Thus, the last question is a ranked one in which students were supposed to order the three approaches according to their own preference. Twenty two students, representing 57,90% from the present research participants, have put cooperative learning in a first place, competitive learning in a second place and finally individualistic learning. The next set of students, composed mainly of ten, expressed their preference by assigning first individualistic learning; then cooperative and lately competitive learning. On the other hand, the six remaining students preferred first competitive learning; then individualistic and cooperative learning. The reached results seem to be clearer in the following Pie-Chart:



Pie-Chart 3.3: Students' Preference for Individualistic, Competitive and Cooperative Learning.

Data Interpretation

To sum up then, the results of the present questionnaire confirm that students, before this year, were usually taught grammar following a traditional way of lecturing and then involving students individually in practice. Meanwhile, some other students experienced working in groups but certainly not cooperative groups as far as they do not hold the needed characteristics of cooperative learning; and which have been deliberately tackled in the first chapter (see sections 1.3, 1.5, and 1.6).

The results obtained from the second rubric of the questionnaire demonstrated that students have benefited, in a way or in another, from working in cooperative groups. This, in fact, includes students' engagement in group discussions though most of them prefer the teachers' explanations instead. Students' discussions are a positive sign that learning was taking place. This fact, actually, has been illustrated by students when almost 79% of them ensured that their grammar competence has been increased after working cooperatively. Besides, cooperative learning enabled students to learn some skills; basically, accepting the others' opinions no matter what their nationality, sex, or educational background is. In this respect, Johnson and Johnson said that **"No skills are more important to a human being than the skills of cooperative interaction"** (1987: 109).

In fact, it is of great value to find that thirty five students, among thirty eight specified for this study, describing the process of working cooperatively as being either enjoyable, exciting or both. In addition to that, cooperative learning was made in first place of preferences though some difficulties were met in the process of working together. Patently, and in the light of what has been said, the students' positive attitudes towards cooperative learning transpired and the third research hypothesis is approved.

3.6. Conclusion

Specifically, the chapter sought to describe and analyse the data collected from the research instruments, i.e., teachers interview, learners' both pre and post-tests, and learners' questionnaire. The type of analysis used was both qualitative and quantitative. Moreover, a micro-level analysis was needed to look at students' performance in each activity in a detailed manner.

Asking students about their own viewpoints was one of the cornerstones in this study. It helped in confirming the three research hypotheses. Students, then, ensured that they have not dealt with grammar in a cooperative way before and they revealed what they think about cooperative learning after living the experience. In other words, they validated the data gathered from the teachers' interview as well as their scores of both tests.

Throughout the next chapter, the investigator will attempt to present some important guidelines and practical suggestions that teachers may benefit from when intending to make use of cooperative learning. Besides, a set of activities will be provided; and which manifest a training process in which students may learn more about English tenses in cooperative groups. The aim behind that is mainly to make both teachers and students familiar with this method of teaching and make learners benefit from it.

CHAPTER FOUR

Suggested Solutions and pedagogical Remedies

- 4.1. Introduction
- 4.2. Cooperative Learning: *Towards the Change*
 - 4.2.1. Teachers' Education and Training
 - 4.2.2. Teaching Cooperative Learning
 - 4.2.3. Stepping into Cooperative Learning: *Marginal Implementation*
- 4.3. Cooperative Learning in the Eyes of Students: *Making the Process Easy*
 - 4.3.1. Teaching Critical Thinking Skills
 - 4.3.2. Teaching Social Skills
- 4.4. Working Collaboratively
 - 4.4.1. Successful Implementation: *Suggested Tips*
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4.1. Introduction

Being the lynchpin of the development of nations, education is given so much attention in an attempt to improve the academic outcomes and solve the educational problems. The aim of every research about education, then, is to contribute in a way or in another in reaching the previously mentioned objectives. The present work, as highlighted before, discusses the main points of the conducted action research and reports how cooperative learning could enhance the learners' grammar competence.

In a similar vein, the present chapter seeks to present important guidelines and pieces of advice to both educators and teachers willing to make use of this method in their educational settings. Having a suggesting nature, the chapter tackles what teachers should know before and after getting hired; in other words, before and during implementing cooperative learning.

4.2. Cooperative Learning: *Towards the Change*

Due to the increasingly changing world, schools are also continuously changing. Thus, it is a challenge for teachers to keep up-dated so to be able to teach different groups of learners in different contexts. This diversity that characterises education nowadays is universally discussed; and one of the undisputed proposed solutions is to make teachers ready enough, skillful enough and disposed enough to deal with a wide range of learners among whom numerous differences keep being recognised.

The educational problems encountered keep the debate open and keep the process of suggesting solutions continuous. Accordingly, Brody *et al* (2004: 3) contended that:

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 of choice.

Being an environment where students' needs are tackled and their abilities are recognised, teachers should be exposed to this method of teaching before and after being hired.

It is highly undisputed that the failure of an educational system and the poor achievement of students may be due to the quality of education that teachers provide. This later, in fact, has a seamless relationship with the quality of education and training that they have received before getting started in the teaching profession. On the other hand, aiming at achieving a high quality education requires a serious focus on teachers as they are one of the significant resources in educational settings.

4.2.1. Teachers' Education and Training

Teacher education is a debatable issue as far as it is decisive to students' achievement. It guarantees that teachers are competent and motivated to do their job. Though some researchers claim that teacher education still has unclear and incoherent goals, it seems to be a little wonder that the commonly accepted goal of teacher education is to prepare teachers to meet the professional issues of today's dynamic education.

Thus, before dealing with how teachers can be exposed to cooperative learning along their education and training, let us first have a look at the main stages that individuals go through to be experienced teachers and what issues determine the quality and the quantity of teachers. In fact, it is of an immense importance to highlight the three phases that teacher education includes. They are, namely, initial teacher education, induction, and continuous professional development. These three components of teacher education should be articulated in a conjoined manner as it is argued among researchers that a kind of coherence should be assured between what teachers are usually provided with in teacher education and what exactly occur in classrooms.

Initial Teacher Education

Teacher education, mainly the initial one, takes place in Universities and institutions. Musset (2010: 4) defines initial teacher education as being **"...the entry point into the profession, and the way it is organised plays a key role in determining both the quality and the quantity of teachers"**. At this level, teachers

get exposed to lectures in the subject area; and in some countries they may even experience teaching in a school for a while.

Precisely, looking at initial teacher education should include not only courses about the subject-matter; rather, courses about how to teach this subject-matter to other students, and how to work effectively with various types of students. Accordingly, initial teacher education can be of two models; concurrent and consecutive.

In the concurrent model, both pedagogical and academic knowledge about the subject-matter are studied at the same time; which may allow a better understanding of the whole situation. However, this may be a disturbing issue for students who still need time and thinking to decide whether to teach or to go to other labour markets. On the other hand, the second model involves dealing with ways of teaching after getting a diploma in the subject-matter. The advantage of this model lies in the fact that graduates have the choice between entering the teaching profession or another workplace (Musset, 2010).

Induction

By induction we mean either including a new teacher to the teaching profession or including a teacher in a new school. However, the first meaning seems to be more appropriate to the context of teacher education. More precisely, teacher induction refers to the first year or the first years of teaching where the teacher is still considered novice, i.e., before getting a kind of experience of teaching. In fact, this period is a sensitive one since it represents the first step in the real practical world and sets the basis for each individual's career. Teachers, at this stage, need help and assistance from educators, administrators and colleagues to better perform and make students better achieve.

Continuous Professional Development

It is acknowledged among researchers that **“Even if they receive a quality initial teacher education, teachers need to be trained their whole life”** (Musset, 2010: 7).

Continuous training, in fact, includes attending conferences and workshops, individual research, and activities inside and outside the educational setting. It seeks to keep the teachers' knowledge updated with the new challenges that face education day by day.

The issue about this phase is that teachers are not required to engage in a continuous professional development. Thus, some teachers may consider the initial education and their own experience as being sufficient. However,

No matter how good pre-service training for teachers is, it cannot be expected to prepare teachers for all the challenges they will face throughout their careers. Education systems therefore seek to provide teachers with opportunities for in-service professional development in order to maintain a high standard of teaching and to retain a high quality teacher workforce (qtd. in Musset, 2010: 11).

Teachers may neglect the importance of sharing the educational challenges and innovations with other teachers; as being a part of the continuing development.

4.2.2. Teaching Cooperative Learning

Conspicuously, and in the light of the previous section (4.2.1), teacher education must equip teachers with all what they need to properly and positively contribute in the teaching profession. Though it is predetermined that cooperative learning, if structured properly, increases the learners' achievement; it is still unappreciated in both initial education and induction of teachers. Additionally, teachers, even if having a kind of experience, do not dare to use this method in their classrooms. When describing the effective teacher, Johnson and Johnson stated that he/she should know when and how to deal with different goal structures including cooperation. They added that **"This may not be easy, as teacher training has by and large neglected preparation in the appropriate utilization of student-student interaction"** (1987: 1).

Accordingly, it is an indispensable matter to try to introduce cooperative learning to teachers during their initial education. Focusing on the Algerian context will lead one to notice that the initial teacher education takes the form of a concurrent model in

Algerian Universities. Students get knowledge about the subject-matter, get the diploma, and then may be found in a teaching situation. Considering EFL contexts, learners of English are required to fulfil the module of TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language). In the TEFL class, students generally get knowledge about the different methods of teaching languages including: The Grammar Translation Method, The Direct Method, The Audio-lingual Method, and Communicative Language Teaching. However, little or no reference is given to the patterns of student-student interaction including cooperation as a teaching method.

Besides, when being asked about cooperative learning during the interview, some teachers explained the fact of having no knowledge about this method by saying that their field of research is ‘Sociolinguistics’ which is far from all the teaching methods and approaches (see section 3.3.1). Thus, it seems of a great importance if teachers include a lecture about cooperative learning in the TEFL syllabus; to make students aware, at least, of the existence of such a method. Additionally, magister students of other disciplines, including sociolinguistics, or Master students can be required to fulfil a module about teaching methods and approaches during their studies (see table 2.1). In this respect, Lyman and Davidson contended that “**...colleges of education should make a special commitment to teaching both the rationale and technique of cooperative learning to undergraduate and graduate students**” (qtd. in Brody et al, 2004: 83).

Regarding the immense positive effects of cooperative learning on individuals and society, student teachers must be taught the essential issues about cooperative learning as well as how influential it is on the learners’ social and academic outcomes. A similar model was developed at the University of Maryland, USA; by Neil Davidson and Rochelle Clemson in the mid 1980s. They designed some courses in which some components of cooperative learning were incorporated. Some of the included elements were:

- Theoretical rationales for cooperative learning.
- Basic characteristics of cooperative learning.
- Social skills that should be available in cooperative groups.

- Teachers' roles in cooperative learning.
- Roles of group participants.
- Models of cooperative learning.

By highlighting these points, both graduate and post-graduate students will have a basic idea about cooperative learning which can be a basis for further research during their induction and continuous professional development.

4.2.3. Stepping into Cooperative Learning: A Marginal Implementation

As explained in section 1.6.2, informal cooperative groups are temporary groups which last for one class or one discussion. The good thing about informal cooperative groups is that they can be used at any time during the semester, i.e. they do not last or cover the whole semester. The teacher, even during his/her induction, may use such a method from time to time to ensure that learning of a certain issue is taking place among students. Other reasons, in fact, may include making sure that students are cognitively processing knowledge and having more time during the lecture to reflect on the content being taught, the way of teaching that content and how students are grasping knowledge. By doing so, novice teachers may start practising how to implement cooperation in their classrooms, and students may start getting familiar with such a method of teaching.

In an attempt to unveil the process of structuring informal cooperative learning, Johnson *et al* provided and explained more steps through which teachers may move. The following is a summary of an informal cooperative learning lecture:

- First of all, teachers may ask students to work in pairs for an *introductory focused discussion*. They can be given a certain task to discuss; from which they can predict what the lecture will be about and at the same time activate their background knowledge.
- The second step is a *lecture segment* step. Teachers present the first part of the lecture which may take 10 to 15 minutes.

- The teacher, then, assigns students to work in the same pairs, but this time on another task that tackles the first part of the lecture. The teacher may inform students that some of them will be randomly selected to present their answers in front of their peers. This way, the teacher assures that all pairs will work and every student will care about his partner's answers.
- Similarly, the teacher may present another segment of the lecture and assign students in pairs for another task. This operation should be repeated till the lecture is done.
- Finally, students should sit in pairs again for a *closure-focused discussion* which **"...should result in students' integrating what they have just learned into conceptual frameworks"** (1991: 92).

Thinking of applying this model in an EFL grammar classroom to teach for instance the past time to students may result in the following steps to be followed:

- The teacher may give an example to students and ask them to discuss in pairs the tenses used and the form of the conjugated verbs.

e.g. He was walking when it started to rain.

From the above example, students may extract the rules about the past tenses and may make reference to the previous studied tenses, i.e. the present progressive; as it is similar in form to the past progressive expressed through the first verb of the given example.

- After completing the first step, the teacher may turn to explain the main uses of the past simple.
- Students, then, may be asked to work in pairs to accomplish such a task about the past simple.

e.g. Write the past forms of these verbs:

Admit, Draw, Learn, Send, Blow, Cry, Meet, Put, Find, Sit, Hit, Tell, And Know.

Adapted from (<http://www.e-grammar.org/past-simple-continuous/test1-exercise3/>)

The teacher, then, will choose some students randomly and ask them to present their answers in front of the class.

- The second segment of the lecture may be about the past continuous in which the teacher may explain the form and the main uses.
- Concerning the second part of the lecture, the following is an example of the tasks that the teacher may provide to students:

e.g. Make the policeman questions, use the words in brackets.

Policeman:? (What/ do/ yesterday at 8.15)

James: I was driving to work.

Policeman: when you saw the dog? (Drive / fast)

James: No, I wasn't.

Adapted from (<http://www.e-grammar.org/past-simple-continuous/test2-exercise3/>)

- For the sake of engaging students in a closure-focused discussion, the teacher can recommend students to solve a task that merges all the parts of the lecture.

e.g. Complete the questions to get more details

- ✓ I had an accident on Monday. – What? (Happen/ to you).
- ✓ When I met him, he was talking on the telephone. – What about? (He / talk).
- ✓ The company wanted to finish this house last week. – And when.....? (They / finish it).
- ✓ I saw your wife last night. She was driving a car. – What car.....? (She / drive).

Adapted from (<http://www.e-grammar.org/past-simple-continuous/test3-exercise3/>)

Following such a model in teaching English tenses to students will help in achieving different objectives, notably:

- Activating background knowledge.
- Engaging students in the learning process.
- Increasing students' caring about each other.
- Increasing students' achievement, and most importantly
- Strengthening the idea of working cooperatively for a better accomplishment of the tasks.

In fact, informal cooperative groups can make students aware of the process and ready for a later implementation of formal cooperative learning.

4.3. Cooperative Learning in the Eyes of Students: *Making the Process Easy*

As being accustomed to work either individualistically or competitively, students may not well grasp the idea of sharing their thoughts, materials and endeavours with their peers. However, if being well prepared for such a new method, students may face the troubles encountered in the cooperative learning process easily. The knowledge needed before entering a cooperative experience includes being aware of the difference between learners, ways of establishing good social relationships, the sense of leadership, feeling responsible of the group learning and conflicts, dealing successfully with assigned academic content and many other issues. In fact, these are all referred to as critical thinking and social skills.

4.3.1. Teaching Critical Thinking Skills

It is acknowledged that cooperative learning requires and promotes the use of critical thinking skills. In fact, an educated person is no more viewed as only the one who knows by heart what was presented to him/her, rather, he/she is the one capable to engage in a reflective thinking process that enables him/her to consider what evidence will make him/her understand, learn and accept what is presented. Critical thinking skills are seen as prerequisites as they do contribute in the development of citizens of

this rapidly changing world. Another part of the story concerns the lack of abilities in solving tasks and scoring on tests which center around the idea of analyses and arguments.

Considering the significance of critical thinking skills is, in itself, a call for increasing students' awareness and including these issues in the education process. Thus, teachers should well highlight analysing, predicting, inferring formulating hypotheses, concluding, deciding and solving problems. This can be done through clear instructions as well as carefully assigning the needed time for the accomplishment of the task (Nelson, 2007). By doing so before thinking of introducing cooperative learning in the classrooms, students may be ready to face some aspects of cooperation, and the process may not seem that awkward to them.

4.3.2. Teaching Social Skills

As highlighted before (see section 1.5.4), social skills are of a great significance in making the cooperative process a successful story. Johnson and Johnson referred to the same point saying 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”** (1987: 13). Therefore, students should realise how accepting others' views, tolerating, respecting, solving conflicts...etc; are important issues for a joyful learning experience.

One way of making students aware of the social skills, their importance and their use is to deliberately teach them to students. In fact, individuals along their process of socialisation acquire new social skills day by day. However, the classroom is a primary setting in which social skills are needed as far as students deal with both teachers and peers. The teacher may motivate students, in other ways, to better use the social skills such as loudly praising a positive behaviour of a student or a group of students or highlighting a certain skill which they may coincidentally come across during lecturing. Accordingly, students may get the basic knowledge about social skills from the direct instruction and develop their competences more through working

in cooperative groups. In fact, the process itself is responsible for teaching students how to deal and interact better with other individuals.

Students may get exposed to a variety of skills before and even during experiencing working in cooperative groups. In fact, there are several activities through which social skills can be taught to students and the students' awareness may be raised. The following will be some selected group related social skills that students may need to work in cooperation effectively, with an explicit explanation of how the activity can take place in the classroom.

4.3.2.1. Problem Solving

By considering the gap between what is done and what should be done as a problem, then a deeper analysis of what was done and the way it was done is needed for the change; to better achieve the desired situation. Besides, the group mates may face conflicts when working on the task as far as a lot of points of view are provided. Thus, a focus on problem solving seems to be needed to prepare students for challenges that they may face when working cooperatively.

To raise students' awareness and develop their problem solving skill, numerous suggested activities may be found; among which teaching the 'problem solving' skill through fairy tales. Language learners get exposed to a number of fairy tales along their studies and which help both in developing the students' language skills and shaping their minds effectively. Accordingly, the following is another way to deal with fairy tales. The teacher may provide students with a story then with a sheet that contains the following problem solving model.

A Problem Solving Model

Every story has a problem that must be solved. Read the story to the point where the problem arises. Before finishing the story to see how the author solves the problem, try solving the problem yourself by using the steps listed below.

Title:

Author:

1. What important facts can you state about the situation?

.....

.....

.....

2. State the major problem
3. List as many ways to deal with the problem as you can. These are your alternatives.
4. Select the three best ideas and enter them on the decision grid below.
5. Two criteria for judging ideas are provided in the grid. The criteria can be changed depending on the problem and the solutions provided.
6. Evaluate each idea on a scale of one to five. A rating of one is poor; a rating of five is excellent.

Scale 1-5 Best Ideas	Is it fast	Is it low-cost

Adapted from (Polette, 2005: 117).

By doing so, students may learn how to have a lot of suggested solutions for the same single problem and how to better choose the most appropriate solution depending on the whole situation and the circumstances.

4.3.2.2. Listening

It is true that one of the reasons for group conflicts is to interrupt peers while trying to explain their views or to show disrespect to their opinions. Thus, it is of a great value to tackle this issue for a better group communication and work. Students, then, should be aware that listening to others' views is a prerequisite in the success of the cooperative group.

To reach such an objective, teachers may introduce some activities to students; and which may help them learn how to effectively listen to others. For instance, the teacher may assign students to sit in groups and provide each group with a sheet that contains some suggested topics. Students then will be asked to choose a topic and speak about it one after the other. The role of each student is to listen without interrupting no matter what their peer is saying; and recording their discussion can help students in respecting the activity rule. After finishing the discussion, the teacher may listen to the recordings to know who interrupted the other participants and who did not. Also, the teacher may engage students in a discussion that involves:

- How well did they listen?
- How much did they recall?
- What distractions did they encounter that took them off of what the speaker was saying?
- Did eye contact help them being focused?, and
- Did they find themselves wanting to interrupt? (Adapted from Mannix, 2009: 131)

In fact, such a discussion may unveil the students' hidden intentions; and which may in turn help them:

- Better control themselves.
- Respect others' points of view.
- Strengthen social relationships with peers, and
- Better perform the assigned tasks.

4.3.2.3. Responsibility

Through engaging students in an activity or a classroom discussion about ‘responsibility’, students will get an overview about some real school situations in which responsibility is shown. Besides, the sense of responsibility may be developed in students as far as it represents a significant aspect of working in cooperative groups. Thus, when being put in a group to accomplish a task cooperatively, students will have already known what it means to be responsible for doing a task appropriately and also responsible for someone else’s learning.

The teacher may ask each student to present a worksheet at the end of the activity; and which includes his/her answers for the teacher’s questions. Typical examples of these questions may be:

- In a school setting, which situations required you to be responsible? And who assigned you for this responsibility?
- How could you show responsibility in those situations?
- Which situations required you to be responsible for on your own?

The discussion may involve all the students’ answers and therefore enable each one to benefit from others’ experiences (Mannix, 2009).

After having an idea about this skill; and for the sake of making a link with cooperation and understanding what form of responsibility is involved in cooperative groups, the teacher may bring and rely on a guest to tell the class about his/her own experience with responsibility. The guest may be a teacher using cooperative learning in his/her own class to talk about his/her students’ behaviour and responsibilities in cooperative groups, or a student who have experienced working cooperatively to speak about his/her own as well as his/her group mates’ responsibilities (ibid).

4.4. Working Collaboratively

Coming across the success stories of cooperative learning may encourage teachers to try this method in their classrooms. However, feeling uncomfortable with

cooperative learning means that the process is implemented “...**without a firm understanding of the underlying principles...**” (Brody et al, 2004: 3). Thus, the present section sheds light on some tips that teachers may rely on in order to implement cooperative learning properly. Besides, it provides some grammar tasks that teachers may make students discuss and solve in cooperative groups.

4.4.1. Implementing Cooperative Learning: *Suggested Tips*

In their article, *Cooperative Learning in the Classroom*, Cooper *et al* (1994) provided teachers who seek to implement cooperative learning in their classrooms with some tips that might facilitate the process; these involve:

- Thinking of using such a method in classes in which the teacher feels more comfortable, classes that do not include a large number of students.
- Teachers are often advised to start small; i.e. to structure groups that are of a small number of students as they are easy to control and help in decreasing group conflicts.
- Following a criteria-referenced system in evaluating the learners' achievement.
- Setting a bonus of few points for rewarding students who correctly accomplish the pre-set number of tasks or who care about their group mates' correct accomplishment of the task. This seems to be a good motivation for students to benefit and make their peers benefit more from the cooperative process.
- Structuring activities that assess individuals' learning rather than the whole group achievement to ensure that learning is taking place with every individual learner and that competent students are not influencing their peers' responses in the group.

As the teacher is intending to structure cooperative learning formally in the classroom, a lot of details concerning the process may seem to have to be seriously taken into consideration. At the same time, neglecting some aspects of cooperative learning may lead to a failure in implementing this method. Thus, Johnson *et al* suggested a checklist that summarises the main aspects of working collaboratively; and that reminds the teacher with his main roles as well as his/her students' roles. The

teacher, as moving in the process may use the checklist as a reference to ensure the learners' successful involvement in cooperative groups. The checklist may take the following form:

- I. Before the group begins:
 - A. Expect them to learn, to enjoy, and to discover.
 - B. Team up with people you don't know.
 - C. Make your group heterogeneous.
- II. As the group begins:
 - A. Make a good first impression.
 - B. Build the team.
 - Do something that requires self-disclosure.
 - Take interpersonal risks that build trust.
 - Establish team goals.
- III. While the group is in existence:
 - A. Work at increasing self-disclosure.
 - B. Work at giving good feedback.
 - C. Get the silent members involved.
 - D. Confront the problems immediately.
 - Work on issues in the group even if they appear to be just between two members.
 - Do not assume you cannot work with someone just because you do not like or respect them.
 - If the group cannot solve a problem, consult the instructor as a group.
 - E. Vary the leadership style needed.
- IV. Wrapping up the group:
 - A. Summarize and review your learning from the group experiences.
 - Analyze the data to discover why the group was more effective or less so.

- Provide final feedback to members on their behavior or contribution.
- B. Celebrate the group's accomplishments.
- Hold a final feedback meeting.

Figure 4.1: Checklist for Better Learning Groups

Source: Johnson et al, 1991: 59

4.4.2. Dealing with Little Academic Content: *Developing Note Taking*

One of the disturbing issues that the teacher may face when starting using cooperative learning in the classroom is the little academic content dealt with in each session; as most of the time specified for the lecture goes in structuring groups, assigning tasks for them, and discussions among them. Thus, teachers may not have enough time to deliberately explain the academic content as they intend to specify time for the group work rather than lecturing, or they simply explain in a brief and a fast way.

Accordingly, students may feel that they do not really benefit from what is being presented in the class. In the Teaching Professor November 2003 issue, Maryellen Weimer presented some tips that teachers may provide their learners with so that they can take notes in a better way and benefit more:

- Instructors should better ask students to focus on what is most important and take notes using their own way rather than copying down the teachers' word by word.
- Even if the teacher seems to be fast in explaining, students may leave blank gaps for the issues they have missed and discuss them later with group mates. Consequently, this increases trust making between group members and creates more opportunities for group discussions (Nelson, 2007).

4.4.3. Increasing Learners' Grammar Competence: *Suggested Lessons*

The present research is an action research which aimed at enhancing second year EFL students' grammar competence through cooperative learning. Thus, the present section follows the same path and suggests some grammar tasks that may be given to students; to be discussed and solved in cooperative groups. The researcher followed the same order of tenses as in the training phase (see section 2.5.4). Accordingly, in each session, the teacher may start first with lecturing in which the main rules of the assigned tenses may be explained. Then, students may be required to accomplish the given tasks cooperatively before randomly choosing some groups to present their responses in front of the whole class, or correcting the tasks all together in a classroom discussion. Examples of tasks may be organised as follows:

First Session: The Present Time

Activity One: Choose the correct verb form.

1. I *write/ am writting/ am writing* a new letter.
2. Susan *is diging/ digs/ is digging* the garden at the moment.
3. Jane *is going/ goes/ go* to bed at 10 o'clock on weekdays.
4. I am in London this summer. I *learn/ am learning/ learning* English.
5. We *are meeting/ meet/ met* our friends next week.
6. My brothers *writes/ are writing/ write* letters every week.
7. The bus sometimes *is arriving/ arrive/ arrives* in the morning.
8. James is a student. But he *work/ works/is working* this week.
9. Lions *are living/live/ is living* in Africa.
10. Our train *leaves/ leave/ is leaving* at 9.25.
11. She *is going/ goes/ gos* to the cinema tonight.
12. My parents *are watching/ watch/ watching* TV now.

Activity Two: Complete the sentences with the verbs in brackets

1. Look. He To us. (listen)
2. We at the hotel this week. (stay)

3. I to bed early on Sundays. (go)
4. My mother is at the shop. She a new dress. (buy)
5. Jill a lot of money. (have)
6. The bus On Sunday night. (leave)
7. Please, stop! You so fast! (drive)
8. We in Berlin each year. (meet)
9. We to the disco on Friday. (go)
10. He usually On time. (come)

Adopted from (<http://www.e-grammar.org/present-simple-continuous/>)

Second Session: The Past Time

Activity One: Conjugate the verbs between brackets in the past simple or the past continuous.

1. When the post man (arrive), my father (have) a shower.
2. While my brother (study), my grandmother (make) some muffins.
3. I (go) to the doctor two days ago because I (have) a terrible headache.
4. When I (be) ten, I (eat) a sandwich every evening.
5. He (miss) the train because he (talk) with some friends.
6. The thieves (come) into the house while the man (sleep).
7. I (drink) a glass of water at eleven. I'm not thirsty now.
8. You (write) the composition last week?
9. My mother (not be) at home when she (fall) down the stairs.
10. The children (plant) a tree when their mother (call) them.

Activity Two: Write the most suitable words in each gap. (ago, yesterday, last, while, when, as, on, in, at)

1. Tommy's father worked in that office two years
2. The plane was flying 8p.m
3. My best friend went to London month.
4. I was having dinner, my sister was having a shower.
5. did the supermarket close?
6. Your aunt studied German 2001.

7. Rose played in an orchestra she was 12 years old.
8. Jason was swimming his girlfriend was drinking a coke.
9. The TV broke 26th October.
10. did he deliver the shopping?
11. My father's friend had a baby
12. The suspect can't have committed the crime. He was having dinner in the restaurant that time
13. My cousin bought the PSP he was in London.

Adopted from (<http://www.englishexercises.org/makeagame/viewgame.asp?id=734>)

Third Session: The Future Time

Activity One: Complete the sentences with the verbs in brackets and use future simple or continuous.

1. I can buy it for you. I (shop) in the afternoon anyway.
2. Is bill at school? – No, he isn't. I suppose he (come).
3. I hope Simon (be) there.
4. Did you remember to invite Mrs. Oates? – Ow, no! I forgot. But I (call) her now.
5. I'll have a holiday next week. I (not get up) at 6 o'clock as usual.
6. You are so late! Everybody (work) when you arrive at the office.
7. Be careful or the cars (knock) you down.
8. We (move) our house this time tomorrow.
9. He (play) tennis at 7.30. He usually starts at 7 o'clock. Could you come before that?
10. Your suitcase is so big. I (take) it for you.

Activity Two: Make questions with the expressions in brackets. Use future simple or continuous.

1. I am not sure if I can offer this room.? (our guest/ like/ it)

2. Can I borrow your laptop tonight?? (you/ use/ it/ at about 9 o'clock)
3. We arrive in Aberdeen at 1 o'clock.? (we/ have/ time/ for/ lunch)
4. The show starts at 8. Please,? (you/ drive/ me/ there)
5. Your journey will be so long. How while you are on the train? (you/ spend/ your time)
6. I've just missed the train. How? (i/ get/ to school)
7. I'd like to see your project. If I come at 4.30,(you/ work/ on it)

Adapted from (<http://www.e-grammar.org/future-simple-continuous/>)

Fourth Session: Perfect Tenses

Activity One: Use the verbs in brackets in present perfect simple or continuous.

1. We can go home. We (mend) three cars today.
2. We (mend) cars since 1 o'clock and we aren't finished.
3. Fortunately, I (find) my credit card. Here it is.
4. I (look for) my keys since we came home. Where are they?
5. She (make) puddings all day.
6. What you (do)? You are so dirty!
7. Why are you crying? – I (watch) a film.
8. Joy (send) you a letter. Look!
9. I (clean) windows since lunch time. It's so exhausting.
10. I can see that you (clean) the windows in the hall and in the kitchen
11. You (work) in the garden so long. You should take a rest now.
12. How many years he (have) this car?

Activity Two: Which one is the right answer (a or b)?

1. Why didn't he do his homework?
 - a) He has forgotten about it
 - b) He had forgotten about it

2. Why were they so tired when they arrived?
 - a) Because they were walking all the way.
 - b) Because they had been walking all the way.
3. When did you make your reservation?
 - a) After I had checked the information
 - b) After I checked the information
4. How did she recognize you?
 - a) I had sent her my photo
 - b) I sent her my photo
5. Where have you been?
 - a) I had worked in England
 - b) I have worked in England.
6. Was the exam over when you were leaving?
 - a) Yes. We had answered all the questions
 - b) Yes. We answered all the questions
7. Why were you late?
 - a) I had been travelling in a traffic jam
 - b) I have been travelling in a traffic jam
8. Why didn't he hear the telephone?
 - a) He was watching TV
 - b) He had watched TV

Activity Three: Choose the correct tense.

1. In twenty years' time most people *will be using/ will have been using* the internet.
2. By this time next year we *will be moving/ will have moved* into our new house.
3. When he retires, he *will have been working/ will work* for fifty years.
4. By 2050 holidaymakers *will have been travelling/ will be travelling* to the moon.
5. As soon as we reach the coast, we *will have sailed/ will have been sailing* for a week.

6. They *will have built/ will build* the station by November.
7. I *will get/ will have got* a job as soon as I leave school.
8. He will come back in summer. By then he *will be staying/ will have been staying* in Cork for two years.
9. At midnight, the speakers *will have been presenting/ will have presented* their projects for ten hours.
10. When we go to see our kids, they *will be/ will have been* at the camp for a fortnight.

Adopted from (<http://www.e-grammar.org/future-perfect-simple-continuous/test1-exercise1/>, <http://www.e-grammar.org/present-perfect-simple-continuous/test1-exercise5/> , and <http://www.e-grammar.org/past-perfect-simple-continuous/test2-exercise2/>)

4.5. College Cooperation: *Sharing the Experience*

Individuals, generally, get graduated from colleges with knowledge about the subject matter or the major studied. However, during their university studies, students do not come across the reality which they would face when entering the labour market. In this sense, Johnson and Johnson (1987: 15) added that:

Schools have long promoted unrealistic expectations of what career, family, and community life may be like. Most careers do not expect people to sit in rows and compete with colleagues without interacting with them. Teamwork, communication, effective coordination, and divisions of labor characterize most real-life settings. It is time for schools to reflect the reality of adult life.

Thus, students should be introduced to cooperative learning through experiencing it with peers in the classroom and through seeing it among teachers and the school or the faculty staff.

A wider vision of cooperative learning includes cooperation among teachers rather than only cooperation between classmates. With the feeling of who can teach best, teachers may feel frustrated, insecure, and may not enjoy their teaching experience.

Teachers, if working alone, can think of innovations to be made in their classrooms. However, their thinking and their innovations may be still limited. If teachers think of sharing the experience with each other, many doors of innovation, further research, and positive outcomes may be wide open. Additionally, the educational setting itself may develop, in a great way, the sense of trust, joy, and positive relationships. On their parts, students may learn the sense of caring about each other and learning together from practically seeing their teachers cooperating with each other. To sum up, then, teachers' cooperation may lead to:

- Developing the sense of cooperation among students.
- Spreading the notion of cooperative learning as a teaching method by citing individual experiences of implementation; and therefore to encourage other teachers to implement it as well.

The design, the curricula of different subject matters, and the technology used are all a part of a college; but do not represent all what the college is. Instead, what teachers do and the way they behave influence most the learners' outcomes. **“The faculty’s effectiveness depends on interpersonal interactions that are oriented towards cooperative achievement of the college’s goals”** (Johnson and Johnson, 1987: 115). Thus, **“Colleges must be cooperative places”** (ibid). Patently, getting convinced that cooperation can be structured at the level of college does not answer the question of how can cooperation established between the college workforce.

In fact, implementing cooperation between teachers is just the same as implementing it among students. Teachers can establish a common goal and start working together to achieve it. Trying to accomplish the same mutual goal may require teachers to:

- Communicate more with each other.
- Trust each other.
- Unify efforts to present the same academic content.
- Help and assist each other; particularly novice teachers in using cooperative learning.

Considering both sharing the experience of implementing cooperative learning and helping and assisting each other, and though informal meetings and discussions can be an occasion where teachers talk about their innovations in teaching, formal meetings can be of a greater value in helping teachers tell their success stories of teaching and making their colleagues aware of the current changes and challenges. In fact, this exactly refers to the continuous professional development of teachers. Three major and famous ways through which teachers may report their teaching experiences and provide help can be by organising conferences and symposiums, by making other teachers read about them in the faculty magazine, and by reciprocally observing each other.

4.5.1. Enriching Written Materials

Though writing articles may seem a chore issue to some teachers, its significance, besides the continuous professional development of individuals, lies in the fact that it can be a useful way to present concise and useful content to other teachers. Most colleges and faculties around the world own magazines in which teachers' articles are published, and therefore become available to both students and workers who seek to be up-dated with the new experiences, innovations and challenges in many domains of life.

Accordingly, teachers who implemented cooperative learning in their classrooms can report their stories through such a way. Their experiences, therefore, may be given a more value and novice teachers may be able to read and learn from them. If including factual illustrating issues, such as the teachers' own observations about students' acceptance of the process and positive outcomes achieved through working collaboratively, teachers who never thought of implementing this method may think of gaining the honor of being a new hero in a new success story of education.

4.5.2. Spreading the Charm of Cooperation: *Open Debates*

It is widely acknowledged that attending conferences provides teachers with the chance to meet major people in the field. They can ultimately help, also, in learning a

lot of new things and improving competences by being exposed to new ideas, practices and investigations. Either by listening to presentations or by hallway conversations, teachers will noticeably benefit, mainly:

- Getting ideas about what others are doing.
- Establishing new relationships with individuals from around the world.
- Widening the view of today's educational challenges.
- Feeling encouraged and ready to try some issues presented by others in the conference.
- Sharing own experiences, and
- Better develop and innovate in own experiences through listening to others' suggestions and opinions.

Obviously, discussing such a method, i.e., cooperative learning, in a national conference or symposium will:

- Help in spreading the idea of cooperative learning among novice teachers, or even experienced teachers who have never used this method before.
- Open the debate about many issues and aspects of cooperative learning.
- Open new doors of investigation.
- Show the main advantages of this neglected method of teaching.
- Engaging others to try this method by presenting its positive outcomes.

4.5.3. Reciprocal Observations

A useful idea that teachers can rely on, in developing better the process of structuring cooperation in the classroom, is to reciprocally observe each other while teaching with this method. In fact, it is a key way for providing teachers using this method with feedback about their strengths and weaknesses in implementing cooperative learning. Thus, teachers may learn from each others' experiences. When teachers are about to start reciprocal observations, some notes should be carefully taken into consideration:

- Knowing that through this process, they will learn from each other; no matter what their educational and cultural background and experiences are.
- Specify certain issues to be emphasised for the observation to be fruitful.
- Feedback should include what the teacher presented and the way it was presented regardless his/her intellectual level and individual competence.
- Later discussions should precisely include how cooperative learning was implemented, and
- Respect should characterise the processes of observations, feedback as well as discussions (Johnson et al, 1991).

4.6. Conclusion

The positive social and academic outcomes achieved through cooperative learning make one realise that the process is worth trying. After highlighting the main steps and challenges that teachers may come across when dealing with this method, it is a prerequisite to think of ways for facing those troubles and better teach with this method. To conclude, then, the chapter incorporated a set of suggestions that may be useful to teachers before, during and after structuring cooperative learning in the classroom. The researcher gave reference to the main issues that make students accept such a new method, and therefore benefit more from working in cooperative groups. Besides, new proposals were suggested, which if being applied at the wider level of faculty, more positive outcomes will be achieved and an enjoying educational atmosphere will be created.

General Conclusion

GENERAL CONCLUSION

Teaching foreign languages is increasingly becoming a needed issue in this gradually changing world. Considering every aspect of language as worth taking, language teachers seek to develop and innovate in all what concerns teaching methods; and a movement towards engaging students in the learning process is witnessed. By way of contrast, though cooperative learning turns students to active and responsible agents in the learning process, it is still not welcome as an effective teaching method in nowadays classes in many educational settings.

Each type of cooperative learning has its remarkable advantages; however, the common point between the three types is how convenient cooperation is to improve both the learners' academic outcomes and socio-affective relationships with peers. Besides, students working in cooperation develop a psychological adjustment towards the concerned educational setting. Accordingly, the present dissertation represents and summarises the process of an action research conducted at the level of the English department at Tlemcen University with second year LMD students. It aimed mainly at implementing cooperative learning in an English grammar classroom to examine to what extent cooperative learning can enhance the learners' outcomes. In addition, the work endeavoured to raise both students' and teachers' awareness of the usefulness of this method.

Training students to work in cooperative groups was a fruitful matter; since inspiring results were achieved in the post-training test. The findings of this study demonstrated that students benefited from working in formal cooperative groups for a semester. Mainly, their grammar competence has been increased and some social skills have been learnt. These include accepting each other's views, caring about each other's learning and feeling responsible of participating in the group either in learning or in conflicts situations. Moreover, a noticeable change in preference has been proved in the learners' responses to the questionnaire where students favoured cooperative learning over competitive and individualistic approaches.

Along the implementation of cooperative learning and along the writing and the organisation of this dissertation, some issues appeared to affect the process. In fact, they cannot be described using any term; but limitations of the research. It is worth mentioning, as being highlighted by teachers who tried to implement this method before, that using this method is not an easy task. Precisely, it is hard for teachers to make their students familiar with cooperation as they were familiar with individualistic and competitive approaches. Furthermore, organising and monitoring the groups as they are working cooperatively may limit the learning time in the classroom which may in turn limits the academic content presented. In reality, another time aspect concerns the dissertation itself; the investigator was limited by time and therefore this work could not tackle other aspects of cooperative learning. Because of this, the investigator, also, could not deal with more than one group; which makes generalisability limited at the end of the research.

As mentioned above, it is hard to produce a comprehensive work in which every detail about cooperative learning is tackled. Hence, the end of this work can be a beginning for other works as it opens many doors for further investigation. In view of that, a deeper understanding of other aspects of cooperative learning can be provided; which in turn better develops students' academic, social and psychological status.

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Accompanying Appendices

**APPENDIX “A”:
Teachers’ Interview**

Dear teachers,

The present interview seeks to collect some information about 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 asked to answer the following questions sincerely for it is important for the success of this work.

1. For how long have you been teaching grammar?
2. How do you generally like teach grammar?
3. Do you prefer teacher-directed teaching or learner-centered teaching?
Why?
4. As being a grammar teacher, do you think that students are generally passive or not willing to work in grammar classes? Why?
5. According to you, do students prefer working competitively, individualistically, or cooperatively? Why?
6. What innovations you usually make to engage students more in the grammar learning process?
7. Have you ever attended any symposium, a workshop, or a conference where cooperative learning was spoken about?
8. Have you ever come across cooperative learning when hearing or reading about teaching methods?
9. What does mean to you cooperative learning?
10. If you are asked to summarize the process of structuring cooperative learning in the classroom, what would you say?
11. Most EFL teachers do not use cooperative learning in their classrooms. In your opinion, what might be the reasons?

Thank you for your collaboration

**APPENDIX "B":
Teachers' Interview Answers**

Teacher 1 :

1. I have been teaching grammar for three years.
2. I generally teach grammar by trying to deal with different methods of teaching grammar. For this year, I just start presenting the lecture by writing the examples on the board and I try to ask the student to define where the verb is, what the tense is, what the form of the tense is, and the aim behind using the tense in the example. For last year, I was dealing differently with grammar. I tried to organize the students in groups, then to give them the examples written on a paper, and then to see if each group is able to define the rules by themselves; but it was not really successful as it is difficult to deal with all the groups because some students just talk between each other, dealing with other subjects rather than grammar. In fact, to have such cooperation, the student should be aware of this method of teaching and learning because they are generally accustomed to just looking at the board, having everything just in front of them, listening to the teachers' explanation and then just write the rules that the teacher dictates. It was really hard for me to organize things differently
3. I prefer learner-centered teaching
4. In fact, yes, I may consider that students are passive in grammar classes; but at the same time it depends on the group. The reason behind this may be the nature of the grammar lectures as these are only rules stated. So, the students feel unable to bring something new.
5. I think that they prefer working cooperatively; because each time I give them an activity to do, they start working in pairs or asking their friends about answers. So I just say, first try to work individually then when you finish try to share your knowledge or compare your answers with your friend to see if you have answered in the same way or differently; but I think that they lack confidence that is why they like working cooperatively.
6. Concerning the innovations I make, I just try to give my students more freedom and get them involved though the teacher of grammar is supposed to give everything. So, I just ask them to go to the library, look for books and have information by themselves.

7. I would like to, but unfortunately I have never attended.
8. My readings are about the competency-based approach and the task-based approach when they focus on the task itself and try to engage the student in working cooperatively but that is all; I cannot give you more details about cooperative learning.
9. I think that cooperative learning means that the students are here to be responsible for their learning and to share their knowledge to reach the objective of the lecture.
10. I have never tried to deal with cooperative learning.
11. Teachers of grammar do not use cooperative learning because the administration does not take into consideration the teachers' suggestions to organize things differently, not to see things just from one side. Also, it depends on the teachers themselves; may be some teachers prefer just to present the lecture as they are accustomed to the traditional way. They do not want to change because they fear the change itself.

Teacher 2:

1. I have been teaching English grammar for three years.
2. Generally, we begin with the lecture; we try to focus on the main rules then we move to practice and exercises.
3. I prefer learner-centered teaching because I want students to share with me the process of learning and teaching.
4. The majority of students are passive but only some students want to learn grammar. The reason is that students hate English tenses as they feel confused.
5. Students want to work together, but I ask them to work individually most of the time because I want to check their level. However, I let them work together only once per two or three weeks.
6. I just try sometimes to make students imagine the real situation in life so they can understand the use of the tense.
7. No, I have not.
8. I have no readings about cooperative learning because my field of interest is sociolinguistics.
9. No idea.
10. I just give the task to students to accomplish it either alone or in groups.
11. It would be so boring to put students in groups and I think there would be no positive results though students like to work with their peers.

Teacher 3:

1. I have been teaching grammar for two years.
2. I like teaching grammar through giving lectures first then practice through exercises.
3. The teacher should be eclectic by sometimes following the teacher-directed approach and sometimes the learner-centered approach. It depends on the exercises.
4. 90% of my students are passive in the grammar class because grammar timing is not suitable since they study from 08.30 to 13.00 and they start the grammar lecture at 13.00 till 16.00.
5. Students are competitive.
6. Sometimes I use jokes in relation to their examples.
7. No, I have not.
8. No.
9. Cooperative learning means to share all what we know with the others.
10. No idea.
11. Teachers do not use cooperative learning for the sake of avoiding discussions out of grammar exercises in the cooperative groups.

Teacher 4:

1. I have been teaching grammar for 5 years.
2. I always start with the lecture then we move to practise.
3. I cannot decide. It seems to me that adopting a learner-centered approach means that I am working with those who have a high level and neglecting those who have, to some extent, lower abilities. So, I just teach in a simplified way to give a chance to poor students in terms of knowledge to grasp the grammatical rules.
4. Students who have a bad level in grammar are generally passive. For the rest, competent students are always active. It depends, also, on the situation and the lecture since they feel more bored with the lecture of tenses because it seems to them redundant to repeat the same ideas about tenses and that have been already seen during the first year.
5. Some students feel really at ease when working individually because working in a group that includes students with a lower level will disturb students with high abilities. The reason is that talking about things that are above their existing understanding will make higher-ability students very tired from explaining all the time. Additionally, it depends, also, on the social relationships with peers. Students can work collaboratively only with classmates whom they have a kind of intimacy with.
6. I do not usually keep the same methodology. In fact, the lack of materials prevent us from innovating, I mean why not to teach grammar via computers just like what we have in oral production courses because it can help us a lot in teaching grammar inductively.
7. The workshops I have attended did not tackle cooperative learning though it is very important.
8. Yes, of course. I am interested in reading about other fields rather than only my field of research.
9. Activities that include and require the efforts of some students rather than only one student like the plays that we used to perform in the oral expression module. But it seems to me that cooperative learning is not suitable for grammar as it involves a set of precised rules. There is not too much to discuss

about or to disagree with classmates about but that does not neglect the importance of cooperative learning in the sense that it creates a sort of relationship and intimacy.

10. I do not make use of cooperative learning in my classroom that's why I have nothing to say.

11. I think that cooperative learning develops the sense of cheating in students and they will behave in tests just like they behave collaboratively in a group; which is not the objective of grammar teachers. Additionally, the lack of reading about cooperative learning can be a reason since there are numerous factors that should be implemented.

Teacher 5:

1. I taught as a secondary school teacher for 11 years and teaching grammar was part of the curriculum because in each unit there was a lesson of grammar and I have been teaching grammar for four years up to now.
2. Sometimes I use the deductive method, i.e. students deduce from a given example or situation, other times I use the inductive method, i.e. I give the rule, the explanation & they practice.
3. I prefer teacher-centered teaching in most situations to direct them and maybe to save time, and in others I prefer learner-centeredness, i.e., I move onto their previous knowledge & I urge them to think, make effort, work alone & learn to be autonomous.
4. I think that students are of different types. There are those who have solid background & even top-notch and can follow the teacher at the advanced level so they are not passive, they may be lazy from time to time but in general they work whenever asked to. But there are others who are of an average & even low level (in grammar) as they are described 'slow learners' instead of bad learners so the task is a bit difficult to make so much effort to reach the required level; maybe they try but they don't succeed so they give up, in such a case they can be considered as passive or not willing. Others are lazy & careless.
5. I noticed that it is very rare that students are individualistic, maybe those who are not of a sociable nature. However, most of the students, when put into some situations they work competitively but most of the time they work cooperatively since they ask and help each other, and exchange ideas.
6. Generally I try to raise their consciousness of the importance and usefulness of grammar in interpreting (listening & reading) and producing (writing & speaking). Up to now, I've not used technology but I have the intention to use the laboratory for extra activities.
7. No.
8. Yes.
9. Cooperative learning means using social strategies in learning, i.e. students help each other. Here we make reference to pair & group work.

10. Frankly, I don't know how to answer this question but I'll try. As I've said before, by cooperative learning I refer to pair & group work. & this can be done inside or outside the classroom. When it is in the classroom, the groups or pairs are divided, the students are given a task to accomplish, the time is limited & the one who reports the work of the group or the pair is designed. The teacher should control the work & move from one group to another.
11. Even though it may be fruitful, teachers do not make use of cooperative learning because it can turn to a mess since not all the students work and they can talk about everything but the given task.

Teacher 6:

1. I've been teaching grammar for six years.
2. I do not really have a preferred or fixed way of teaching grammar since teaching, in general, differs from one situation to another, from one level to another and from one group to another.
3. Personally, I prefer learner- centered learning. Because, broadly speaking, our teaching has to take as its first basis students' needs and lacks.
4. No, I don't think so; or at least not all of the students behave the like. I think that step by step and by choosing the appropriate method, it is possible for a teacher to make, may be not all of his students, but the majority of them engaged in the grammar learning process.
5. According to my relatively short teaching experience, students do work competitively, individualistically and cooperatively but at different instances. In fact, the working style is not a matter of preference but rather a choice depending on the learning situation in which you are involved.
6. Sometimes, I bring some audio and/ or visual aids to the classroom to make the learning process less monotonous, more attracting and motivating. Other times, I ask the students to work in pairs or groups, depending on the type of activity given, in order to make them work cooperatively or to push passive and ashamed ones to be more engaged in the learning process. In other instances, I ask the students to prepare a summary of the next lecture highlighting its most important points. This summary is presented orally by 1, 2, 3, or more students in front of their peers at the beginning of the lecture, and then the lecture as a whole is given and explained in detail by the teacher.
7. No.
8. Yes.
9. It means having students working in groups for the sake of completing a task or solving a problem.
10. Dividing the students into small groups in order to perform a specific task; solving a given problem, completing an activity or doing a research work together.

11. May be because the students are not so responsive to and engaged in this type of practice in the classroom or simply because the teachers themselves are not very open to cooperative learning and prefer to stick to their usual way of teaching.

**APPENDIX “C”:
Learners’ Pre-training Test**

Activity 1: Complete this dialogue with these verbs in the present perfect or past simple.

Ask be (2) have make not call not eat not know
not seem say tell

It's Monday afternoon. Ron is at home, phoning Sue at the office where they both work.

Ron: Hi Sue, it's me.

Sue: Well hello! Where (1) **have** you **been** all day? The boss (2).....me this morning where you (3)....., but he (4).....to be looking for you or anything.

Ron: What (5).....you.....?

Sue: I (6).....him that I (7)..... Are you okay?

Ron: I'm sorry I (8).....you this morning. I (9).....the flu since Saturday. I (10).....anything for two days and it (11).....me feel really weak. But I'll probably be there tomorrow.

Activity 2: Underline the correct word or phrase in each sentence.

- a) I haven't decided yet about whether to buy a new car or a second-hand one. But / *I think about It / I'm thinking about it.*
- b) All right, you try to fix the television! But *I hope / I'm hoping* you know what you're doing.
- c) Every year / *I visit / I'm visiting* Britain to improve my English.
- d) It's time we turned on the central heating. *It gets / It's getting* colder every day.
- e) Of course, you're Mary, aren't you! / *I recognize / I am recognizing* you now.
- f) The film of 'War and Peace' is very long. *It lasts / It is lasting* over four hours.
- g) I can see from what you say that your mornings are very busy! But what *do you do/ are you doing* in the afternoons?
- h) I'm going to buy a new swimming costume. My old one *doesn't fit / isn't fitting* any more.
- i) That must be the end of the first part of the performance. What *happens/ is happening* now?
- j) What's the matter? Why *do you look / are you looking* at me like that?

Activity 3: Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given. Do not change the word given.

a) I don't suppose you have heard the news.

- won't

You **won't have heard** the news.

b) The Prime Minister expects an easy victory for his party in the election.

- believes

The Prime Minister the election easily.

c) I've been in this company for almost three years.

- will

By the end of the month in this company for three years.

d) This book will take me two years to write.

- have

In two years' this book.

e) Scientists are on the point of making a vital breakthrough.

- about

Scientists are a vital breakthrough.

f) Maria is pregnant again.

- have

Maria is baby.

g) I'll be home late.

- until

I late.

h) No one knows what the result of the match is going to be.

- who

No one knows the match.

i) Don't worry; David won't be late.

- here

Don't worry; David time.

j) Mary and Alan's wedding is next weekend.

- getting

Mary and Alan next weekend.

Activity 4: Complete each paragraph with one set of verbs, using the past simple or past continuous. *Miss / not get / wonder* *break / see / steal / teach*

Come / listen / make / say *explain / talk / understand*

- a) We (1).....to music when one of the neighbours (2).....
to the door and (3).....she couldn't sleep because we (4).....
.....too much noise.

- b)* Someone (5).....into Barbara's office and (6).....
Her computer yesterday afternoon while she (7).....her history
class. No one (8).....the thief.
- c)* Because he never (9).....anything very clearly, none of us
(10).....what the science teacher (11).....about
most of the time.

Adopted from (Yule, 2006: 21-22; and Vince & Sunderland, 2003: 3-11).

**APPENDIX “D”:
First and Second Session Task**

The Present Time

Activity One: Complete each paragraph with one set of verbs, using the present simple or present continuous

Know / look / not be / repair / use

be / be / have / say / tell

Be / live / look / move / resemble

- A. My computer (1).....very irritating right now. Every time I (2)it to save something, it (3)it (4)no space in its memory, which (5)ridiculous.
- B. Whales and Dolphins (6)like fish, but they (7)mammals that (8)live in the ocean and (9)through water in ways that (10).....the movements of a dog rather than those of a shark.
- C. Man: Excuse me. I (11)for Mrs. Adamson, but she (12)in her usual classroom. (13).....you.....where she is?
- Woman: Oh, they (14)her classroom ceiling this week so she (15).....the library as her classroom.

Activity Two: Underline the correct word or phrase in each sentence.

- a) I work in this office *all this year/all the time*.
- b) Emerson is *currently/for long* top of the driver's league.
- c) I am not making much money *these days/so far this year*.
- d) The food tastes even worse *now/presently*. You've put too much salt in.
- e) *Normally/previously* we get in touch with customers by post.
- f) Pete was ill but he is getting over his illness *soon/now*.
- g) I'm feeling rather run down *lately/at present*, doctor,
- h) I always stay on duty *since/until* six o'clock.
- i) I'm *often/forever* picking your hairs out of the bath!
- j) Fortunately the baby *now/recently* sleeps all night.

Activity Three: Choose the correct verb form

- A. I / *write* / *am writing* / *am writting* / a letter now.
- B. Susan / *is diging* / *digs* / *is digging* / the garden at the moment.
- C. Jane / *goes* / *is going* / *go* / to bed at 10 o'clock on weekends.
- D. I am in London this summer. I / *learn* / *am learning* / *learning* / English.
- E. We / *meet* / *are meeting* / *met* / our friends next week.
- F. My brothers / *writes* / *are writing* / *write* / *letters* every week.
- G. The bus sometimes / *is arriving* / *arrive* / *arrives* / in the morning.
- H. James is a student. But he / *work* / *works* / *is working* / this week.
- I. Lions / *are living* / *live* / *is living* / in Africa.
- J. Our train / *leaves* / *leave* / *is leaving* / at 9:25.

Adapted From (Yule, 2006: 19; Vince & Sunderland, 2003: 3, and
<http://www.e-grammar.org/present-simple-continuous/test1-exercise1/>)

**APPENDIX “E”:
Third Session Task**

The Past Time**Activity One: Correct the mistakes in the use of tenses in this text**

A few years ago, when my friend and I were hitchhike (hitchhiking) through France, we sometimes stop for the night in a park or a field. If it wasn't rain, we just sleep outside in our sleeping bags under the stars. We really enjoying that. If it was rain, we put up our small tent and crawl inside for the night. One night, while we sleep in the tent, I think that the ground moving under me. I sit up and realize that the tent was try to move and only the weight of our bodies was hold it in place. When we get outside, we discover that we stand ankle-deep in a small stream and our tent slowly floats away. At first, we really surprised and worried, but then we think it is very funny.

Activity Two: Complete the sentences using these pairs of verbs. Use the past simple in one space and the past continuous in the other.)

arrive/get go/get meet/work look/slip wait/order ski/break

1. Just as I *was getting* into the bath the fire, alarm *went* off.
2. Helen her leg while she in Switzerland.
3. We when I in a music shop.
4. When his mother in the other direction Steve away quietly.
5. I a drink while I for Pam to arrive.
6. Our guests were early.
They as I changed.

Adopted from (Yule, 2006: 21 and Hewings, 1999: 13)

**APPENDIX “F”:
Fourth Session Task**

The Future Time

Activity One: Rewrite the underlined verb forms and use future simple or continuous

- Don't call me at 10 o'clock. I am going to fly to Spain.
- I suppose we are going to stay at a hotel next summer.
- Come to see me in the afternoon, I work in the garden.
- Do you think it is snowing at the weekend?
- Is the coat O.K? –Yes, I am taking it.
- This time on Sunday we are going to ski in France.
- I don't know if I will stay here. Perhaps I move to a big city one day.
- Every student is using a computer in the future.

Activity Two: Match the following sentences.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1) I can take you to the airport | a) I'll be going that way |
| 2) If you think it is shorter | b) I'll go that way |

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1) Shall I say hello to her | a) I'll write to her |
| 2) She should know about it | b) I'll be writing to her |

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| 1) Will you go to sleep | a) When I return |
| 2) Will you be sleeping | b) When you return |

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| 1) He won't be here tomorrow | a) He will be signing the new contract |
| 2) He has no objections | b) He'll sign the new contract |

- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1) You can rely on him | a) He will be delivering the letters |
| 2) You can't wait for him | b) He will deliver the letters |

Adopted from (<http://www.e-grammar.org/future-simple-continuous/>)

**APPENDIX “G”:
Fifth Session Task**

Perfect Tenses

Activity One: Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given. Do not change the word given.

a) This has been my home for thirty years.

- **lived**
- I *have lived* here for thirty years.

b) Eating Chinese food is new to me.

- **never**
- I before.

c) Tony hasn't been to Paris before.

- **first**
- It's to Paris.

d) We haven't been swimming for ages.

- **since**
- It's swimming.

e) Mary started learning French five years ago.

- **has**
- Mary five years.

f) I am on the tenth page of this letter I am writing.

- **ten**
- So far I of this letter.

g) It's over twenty years since they got married.

- **for**
- They have than twenty years.

h) The last time I saw Dick was in 1995.

- **seen**
- I haven't 1995.

i) There is a definite improvement in your work.

- **has**
- Lately improved.

j) This is my second visit to Hungary.

- visited
- This is the Hungary.

Activity Two: Complete these sentences using one of the following. Use the past perfect or the past perfect continuous. (You will need to use a negative verb form in some cases.)

pay / bills stay / friends smoke / cigar try / to steal / car
attend / classes cycle / quite fast

1. She returned to the house where she *had been staying with friends*.
2. Sue until she reached the hill.
3. By the smell in the room and his guilty expression I could tell that Alex.....
4. The principal called Carmen into his office because she.....
5. I had to give Peter some money when I found out that he.....
6. He told the police that he.....He said he thought it belonged to his brother.

Adopted from (Vince & Sunderland, 2003: 25, and Hewings, 1999: 21)

**APPENDIX “H”:
Sixth Session Task**

General Revision**Activity 1: Put each verb in brackets into the present simple or present continuous.**

- British people(drink) more and more wine, apparently.
- I hope Sarah will be here soon. I(depend) on her.
- Please be quiet, David. You(forever/interrupt).
- Hey, you! What(you/think) you're doing?
- Could you come here please? I(want) to talk to you now.
- Jane is away on holiday so Linda(handle) her work.
- To be honest, I(doubt) whether Jim will be here next week.
- You've only just started the job, haven't you? How(you/get on)?
- Pay no attention to Graham. He(just/be) sarcastic.

Activity 2: Choose a verb with either the present perfect or past simple for these sentences.

Agree appear continue disappear move reach show solve write

1. Research *has shown* that cycling can help patients overcome their illnesses.
2. The rabbit just..... in my garden one day last week.
3. With this promotion, I feel that I..... a turning point in my career.
4. Oh, no! My car..... !
5. Quite early in the negotiations, they..... to lower the prices.
6. In 1788 he..... his last great work in Vienna.
7. There's not much more to do, now that we..... the main problem.
8. Throughout the summer of 1980 Malcolm..... to divide his time between London and New York.
9. When he was 13, his parents..... to the United States.

Activity 3: Underline the correct answer.

1. Alice felt very pleased with herself. She *had found* *I found* what she was looking for.
2. 'Where are we?' *had asked* *I asked* Martha.

3. By the time I got back to the bathroom, the bath *had overflowed* / *overflowed*.
4. She walked into the station only to find that the train *had left* / *left*.
5. I was just about to leave when I *had remembered* / *remembered* my briefcase.
6. My sister told me that Joe *had died* / *died*.
7. He *had looked* / *looked* at his watch again and began to walk even faster.
8. In a surprise move, the Prime Minister *had resigned* / *resigned* last night.

Activity 4: These sentences refer to the future. Complete them with either going to or the present continuous, whichever is correct or more likely, using any appropriate verb.

1. I can't go any further. I..... on that bench for a while.
2. The game..... at two o'clock tomorrow. I hope you can be there.
3. The service here is very slow. I..... to the manager if we're not served soon.
4. I have a right to be heard, and no-one..... me from putting my side of the argument.
5. The two leaders..... for talks later this afternoon.
6. The bank has announced that it..... its interest rates by one per cent from tomorrow.
7. Are you..... my questions or not?

Adapted from (Vince & Sunderland, 2003: 4 and Hewings, 1999: 7, 19, 25)

**APPENDIX "I":
Learners' Post-training Test**

Activity 1: Choose the correct form of the word from those in brackets. Underline it.

1. He was travelling with a friend who (went out, had gone out) to buy a newspaper.
2. These were few people on the platform. All who were travelling (took, had taken) their sets.
3. Our water pipes (froze, have frozen) again.
4. I (have known, knew) her since 2000.
5. When the bell (rang, had rung) the door burst open.
6. Anyone (has spoken, spoke) to you about the assembly program?
7. I regretted that I (chose, had chosen) such a broad topic.
8. The vegetables you can see (were probably treated, have probably been treated) with pesticides- chemicals that kill the small animals.

Activity 2: Complete the sentences with appropriate verbs. Use the same verb for each sentence in the pair. Choose the present continuous if possible; if not, use the present simple.

- 1.a. It us a fortune at the moment to send our daughter to dance classes.
- b. It..... a fortune to fly first class to Japan.
- 2.a. I..... sitting down at the end of a long day and reading a good book.
- b. It's a wonderful book. I every moment of it.
- 3.a. We've always wanted a house in the country, but weon where it should be.
- b. When they agree with each other on so many important issues, I can't understand why they.....now on this relatively minor matter.
4. a. With growing concerns about the environment, peopleto use recycled paper products.
- b. He doesn't like publicity, and..... to stay firmly in the background.
- 5.a. 'Can I speak to Dorothy?' 'She a shower. Can I take a message?'
- b. My brother..... three children, all girls.
- 6 a Although hethree cars, all of them are extremely old.
- b. In the north of the country, fewer and fewer peoplethe houses they live in.

Activity 3: Put each verb in brackets into a suitable verb form.

- a) In twenty-four hours' time *I'll be relaxing* (I/relax) on my yacht.
- b) There's someone at the door.' That..... (be) the postman.'
- c) By the time you get back Harry(leave).
- d) It's only a short trip. I..... (be) back in an hour.
- e) What(you/do) this Saturday evening? Would you like to go out?
- f) By the end of the week we(decide) what to do.
- g) It(not/be) long before Doctor Smith is here.
- h) We'll go to the park when you(finish) your tea.
- i) It's very hot in here. I think I(faint).
- j) What..... (you/give) Ann for her birthday? Have you decided yet?

Activity 4: Underline the correct word or phrase in each sentence.

- a) When you passed the town hall clock, did you notice/*were you noticing* what time it was?
- b) Last night my neighbours *were shouting*/would shout for hours and I couldn't get to sleep.
- c) When you lived in London, *did you use to travel*/were you travelling by bus?
- d) Everyone was having a good time, although not many people *danced*/were dancing.
- e) Jill was really hungry because she *didn't eat*/hadn't eaten all day.
- f) Before we went to the theatre, we *called in*/had called in at George's cafe for a pizza.
- g) It took a while for me to notice, but then I did. Everyone *stared*/was staring at me. What had I done wrong?
- h) Nobody bothered to tell me that the school *decided*/had decided to have a special holiday on Friday.
- i) I *was trying*/tried to get in touch with you all day yesterday. Where were you?
- j) A: Excuse me, but this seat is mine.
B: I'm sorry, I *didn't realise*/hadn't realised that you were sitting here.

Adopted from (English Grammar Tests, 2003: 15; Hewings, 1999: 5 and Vince & Sunderland, 2003: 9-16)

**APPENDIX “J”:
Learners’ Questionnaire**

Dear student,

The present questionnaire aims at evaluating your grammar competence after working with cooperative learning as well as checking your attitudes towards this method of teaching. Thus, you are kindly requested to answer the following questions and which may better contribute to the success of the present research.

Age:

Sex:

Native Language:

1. Being an EFL student, does grammar seem to you important to learn English?

Yes

No

Why?

.....

.....

.....

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

.....

.....

.....

3. Have you ever worked in cooperative groups before this year?

Yes

No

If yes, in what context and when?

.....

.....

.....

4. According to you, what kind of explanation seems to be clearer?

Teacher's Explanation

Classmates' Explanation

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

Your explanations to the group members

Group members' explanations to you

You all involved in discussions

6. How do you consider your grammar level after you worked in cooperative groups?

.....
.....

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

The sense of leadership and responsibility

Caring about others' learning

Accepting different view points

Solving group conflicts

Trusting others

Others (Specify the other skills please)

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

8. How would you describe the process of working in cooperative groups?

Disturbing

Less exciting

Exciting

Enjoyable

9. What difficulties you have found when working in cooperative groups?

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

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

- Individualistic approach
 Competitive approach
 Cooperative approach

Thank you for your help with our study!

**APPENDIX "K":
Variance and S.D of the Pre-test**

N ^o of Students	Scores (xi)	(xi- \bar{x})	(xi - \bar{x}) ²
S 1	02	-6.83	46.64
S 2	03.5	-5.33	28.40
S 3	05.5	-3.33	11.08
S 4	03.75	-5.08	25.80
S 5	05.5	-3.33	11.08
S 6	06	-2.83	8
S 7	06	-2.83	8
S 8	06.25	-2.58	6.65
S 9	06.25	-2.58	6.65
S 10	06.25	-2.58	6.65
S 11	06.25	-2.33	5.42
S 12	06.75	-2.08	4.32
S 13	07	-1.83	3.34
S 14	07.25	-1.58	2.49
S 15	07.25	-1.58	2.49
S 16	07.25	-1.58	2.49
S 17	07.75	-1.08	1.16
S 18	08	-0.83	0.68
S 19	09	0.17	0.02
S 20	09.25	0.42	0.17
S 21	09.25	0.42	0.17
S 22	09.25	0.42	0.17
S 23	09.25	0.42	0.17
S 24	09.75	0.92	0.84
S 25	10	1.17	1.36
S 26	10.5	1.67	2.78
S 27	11	2.17	4.70
S 28	11	2.17	4.70
S 29	11.25	2.42	5.85
S 30	11.5	2.67	7.12
S 31	11.5	2.67	7.12
S 32	11.75	2.92	8.52
S 33	12.25	3.42	11.69
S 34	12.75	3.92	15.36
S 35	13.25	4.42	19.53
S 36	13.5	4.67	21.80
S 37	15.25	6.42	41.21
S 38	15.5	6.67	44.48
			379.1

$$\text{Var 1 : } (xi - \bar{x})^2 / (N-1)$$

$$\text{Var 1 : } 379.1 / (38-1)$$

$$\text{Var 1 : } 379.1 / 37$$

$$\text{Var 1 : } 10.24$$

$$\text{S.D 1 : } \sqrt{\text{Var1}}$$

$$\text{S.D 1 : } \sqrt{10.24}$$

$$\text{S.D 1 : } 3.2$$

APPENDIX "L":
Variance and S.D of the Post-test

N° of Students	Scores (xi)	$(xi - \bar{x})$	$(xi - \bar{x})^2$
S 1	10.75	-1.42	2.01
S 2	11.5	-0.67	0.44
S 3	11.75	-0.42	0.17
S 4	12.75	-0.58	0.33
S 5	11	-1.17	1.36
S 6	11.75	-0.42	0.17
S 7	11.25	-0.92	0.84
S 8	11	-1.17	1.36
S 9	11.75	-0.42	0.17
S 10	11	-1.17	1.36
S 11	14	-1.83	3.34
S 12	10	-2.17	4.70
S 13	10.25	-1.92	3.68
S 14	11.25	-0.92	0.84
S 15	09.5	-2.67	7.12
S 16	12.5	0.33	0.10
S 17	11.25	-0.92	0.84
S 18	11.5	-0.67	0.44
S 19	13.75	1.58	2.49
S 20	13.25	1.08	0.16
S 21	08	-4.17	17.3
S 22	11	-0.42	0.17
S 23	11.5	-0.67	0.44
S 24	13.75	1.58	2.49
S 25	14	1.83	3.34
S 26	11.25	-0.92	0.84
S 27	14.5	2.33	5.42
S 28	13	0.83	0.68
S 29	10.5	-1.67	2.78
S 30	10.5	-1.67	2.78
S 31	12	-0.17	0.02
S 32	13.75	1.58	2.49
S 33	13	0.83	0.68
S 34	14	1.83	3.34
S 35	13.5	1.33	1.76
S 36	13.5	1.33	1.76
S 37	17	4.83	23.32
S 38	16	3.83	14.66
			117.19

$$\text{Var } 2 : (xi - \bar{x})^2 / (N-1)$$

$$\text{Var } 2 : 117.19 / (38-1)$$

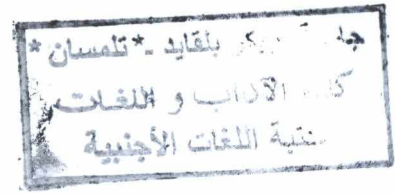
$$\text{Var } 2 : 117.19 / 37$$

$$\text{Var } 2 : 3.16$$

$$\text{S.D } 2 : \sqrt{\text{Var}2}$$

$$\text{S.D } 2 : \sqrt{3.16}$$

$$\text{S.D } 2 : 1.77$$



Summary in English:

The present research, in fact, sought to answer the question of whether or not structuring cooperative learning in the English grammar classroom may enhance the learners' grammar competence. Thus, an action research was conducted with second year LMD students of English at Tlemcen University; where students received a training. This later turned around the idea of working in formal cooperative groups.

Key-words:

Cooperative learning, English grammar classroom, action research, formal cooperative groups.

Résumé en Français :

La présente recherche a cherché à répondre à la question de savoir si ou non la structuration de l'apprentissage coopératif en classe de grammaire d'Anglais peut améliorer les compétences de grammaire des apprenants. Ainsi, une recherche-action a été menée avec des étudiants de deuxième année LMD d'Anglais à l'Université de Tlemcen, où les étudiants ont reçu une formation sur l'idée de travailler en groupes coopératifs formels.

Mots-clés:

L'apprentissage coopératif, classe de grammaire d'Anglais, la recherche-action, les groupes coopératifs formels.

ملخص باللغة العربية:

هدفت هذه الأطروحة إلى الإجابة عن مسألة تعزيز الكفاءة النحوية للمتعلم عن طريق التعلم التعاوني البناء لدى طلبة قواعد اللغة الإنجليزية. ومن أجل هذا تمت هذه الدراسة بجامعة تلمسان مع طلبة اللغة الإنجليزية السنة الثانية نظام (ل م د) حيث خضع الطلاب إلى هذا التدريب الذي تمحور حول فكرة العمل في مجموعات تعاونية رسمية.

الكلمات المفتاحية:

التعلم التعاوني، قسم قواعد اللغة الإنجليزية، القيام بالبحث، المجموعات التعاونية الرسمية.