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**Enhancing Speaking Skill Using Cooperative
Learning**

The Case of Students of Second Year Secondary School JILALI
LIYABES in Hassi-Messaoud

Before the jury

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Dedication

In the name of Allah, Most Merciful, Most Gracious

Praise be to ALLAH, the almighty, for always being there for me and blessing me with health, strength, and peace for every goal proposed in my life.

It gives me an immense pleasure to dedicate my dissertation at the feet of my adorable and affectionate parents CHABANI Moradj and LAMOUDI Meriem and who taught me the value of the education, I am deeply grateful to them for their love, encouragement, and continued support and faith in me,

My dearest sisters “Yasmine” “Romaissa” “Radia” and “Manel” who has never saved any effort to help me. I remain eternally thankful to them,

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care, and patience.

ABSTRACT

The present study aims to investigate the significance of using cooperative learning on improving learners' speaking production and communicative skills in EFL classes. The aim of the present work is to shed some light on the importance of establishing friendly and relaxed atmosphere as an attempt to motivate learners to use English language. It also attempts to make use of small structured groups to improve learner's oral performance and decrease the learner's shy and inhibition. To carry out this research and investigate our hypothesis, we implemented the qualitative approach; classroom observation for second year secondary school students and an interview for EFL Teachers of the Foreign Languages stream at JILALI LIYABES secondary school of Hassi-Messaoud were used as the main data gathering tools to get an insight into how cooperative learning is implemented by EFL teachers during the scholar year 2016-2017. The research findings have shown that learning in small groups developed learner's oral skill and confirmed that the implementation of cooperative learning have some negative points. Finally, this study recommended some suggestions for teachers to guide them for effectively use cooperative learning and to help pupils to improve their speaking skill.

Key words: Speaking skill-Cooperative learning- Motivation- Small structured groups-EFL teachers

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List of Abbreviations:

- EFL:** English as a Foreign Language
- TEFL:** Teaching English as a Foreign Language
- CLT:** Communicative Language Teaching
- TBL:** Task Based Learning
- SL:** Second Language
- CL:** Cooperative Learning
- PI:** Positive Interdependence
- STAD:** Student Team-Achievement Divisions
- TGT:** Teams-Games-Tournament
- TAI:** Team Accelerated Instruction

General Introduction

1. Introduction

It is generally accepted that knowing a language and speaking it are not the same because speaking is a skill which has to be developed and practiced inside and outside the classroom. Unfortunately the majority of students of English have many difficulties to speak it and use it and this weakness of production may be a result of many reasons but the most important one is because of the lack of practicing the language. EFL teachers are in a constant search of what may help their learners to increase their level of language proficiency by using the language through participation techniques and procedures. Moreover, teaching a foreign language is an interactive process which involves active participation of both teachers and learners since language is learned best when students interact with each other in groups. EFL teachers may face situations in which students are unwilling to speak, because of many reasons such as: shyness and anxiety, fear of making mistakes, uninterested topics and lack of self-confidence. Therefore, the cooperative learning is proposed as a suitable solution for teachers to create communicative environment and successful learning atmosphere in the classroom. In addition, learners are given more opportunities to speak and improve their proficiency level by developing their self-esteem and reducing their inhibition, it has been recognized by Kagan (2009) that teachers using cooperative learning give their students chance to interact and vary their learning styles so that they get interested in the learning task.

2. Statement of the Problem

The main objective of learning a foreign language is to communicate using. The majority of EFL students in Algeria encounter many difficulties when they communicate in English language. Improving the learners' speaking ability in English is one of the most important challenges that the Algerian teachers try to achieve. The problem we are confronted with here is that the importance of speaking skill is almost neglected and of little interest and the learners are just passive consumers of the knowledge. Thus, teachers have to create an active atmosphere in the classroom in order to motivate all learners to speak and express their

opinions without hesitation, and the preferable effective technique will be through cooperative learning group work that helps students to interact with each other and construct knowledge to communicate effectively. Therefore, this study investigates the effectiveness of this technique in developing learners' speaking ability.

3. Significance of the Study

The present study is important for the following reasons. First of all, it provides learners with a general overview of speaking skill and increases readers' understanding of the nature of cooperative learning technique and its role in developing language teaching so that teachers will be able to integrate it to teach different aspects of language. Moreover, it highlights the process of managing cooperative learning classroom and the different challenges teachers and groups may face when this technique is implemented in the classroom; consequently, the present study provides instructors and learners with suggested solutions to overcome these difficulties and benefit from the use of cooperative learning in the future.

4. Research Questions

There is one main question to be investigated and two sub questions in this research:

- ✓ To what extent cooperative learning enhance EFL pupils speaking skill?

Sub questions

- ✓ What are the EFL students' speaking deficiencies?
- ✓ Does co-operative learning could help EFL learners to activate their speaking skill?

5. Hypotheses Research

We hypothesis that:

- ✓ If teachers use cooperative learning in the classroom, then the learner's speaking skill will be enhanced.
- ✓ If the learners work in groups, then they will feel more comfortable and motivated to use English language inside the classroom.

6. Research Methodology

We opted in the present study for the descriptive method because descriptive methods according to Brown et al. (1999) are used to accomplish three purposes; describing behavior, exploring a phenomenon or to test a hypothesis about behavior. In the present study, we used

the descriptive method to explore how cooperative learning technique is implemented by EFL teachers in the classroom and discover whether its integration in teaching speaking skill develops learners' oral skill.

7. Participants

The populations of the present study are the pupils of second year JILALI LIYEBES secondary school Stream of Foreign Languages of English at Hassi-Messaoud. The whole population contains around 30 in one class to be observed over eight continuing sessions. Since the present study explores how teachers at JILALI LIYABES secondary school implement cooperative learning in their classrooms, especially in teaching speaking skill, we are interested also in teachers at the same stream because they have the necessary knowledge concerning the implementation of cooperative learning technique in teaching speaking skill.

8. Research Instruments

In an attempt to answer the research hypotheses, a qualitative data will be gathered through classroom observation and teachers' interview. Classroom observation would provide us with real data about different aspects of the cooperative classroom such as management of the physical environment, students' collaboration and teacher's roles because observation according to Wallace (1998) is one of the protocols used in qualitative research mainly to assess a teacher's performance or way of teaching and to establish objective data concerning what goes on in a range of classrooms for the sake of developing the profession of teaching, it will be used in our context neither for assessment nor for generalizing findings but

for exploring aspects of what goes on in EFL classrooms between learners working in groups for the benefit of improving and developing the teaching of speaking skill at classrooms.

In addition to classroom observation, we used structured interview as the second main data gathering tools because interview according to Wallace (1998) is helpful in seeking experiences and opinions of speaking skill concerning how to manage cooperative classroom, what are the roles of the teacher in implementing cooperative learning technique in the classroom and clarifies the different cooperative speaking tasks and activities and cooperative assessments.

9. Limitations of the Study

Even though observation and interviews are appropriate and effective procedures for gathering information in qualitative studies as in the present study, their implementation was not easy. Moreover, most of English teachers in Hassi-Messaoud do not know cooperative learning so it was hard to find out where to do our observation and with whom we are going to do our interview. Observing the physical settings, the teacher and the individual learners at one time was not possible. Also, because the present study is conducted with a small sample and limited to teaching speaking skill it may not be considered reliable results.

Chapter One

General Overview on Speaking Skill

Introduction

The central theme of this chapter is to provide an overview on speaking skill in foreign language teaching context; its value through the history of language teaching, various definitions, aspects, elements, activities its importance and we will discuss the reasons of EFL learner's inability to speak.

1. Historical Background

For many years, teaching speaking has been undervalued, the Grammar-translation - Method which is one of the most traditional teaching methods has been in use since the 19th century. During the instruction, teachers use mother tongue to teach target language. It focuses on learning the rules of grammar and speaking fluency is not emphasized in language classroom. The Grammar-Translation Method "a method of foreign or second language teaching which makes use of translation and grammar study as the main teaching and learning activities"(Richards,2002, 231), the main stream of teaching speaking turns to a more 'learning- through-conversation' way (the Direct Method).

The Direct Method of teaching foreign languages, sometimes also called the Natural Method, refrains from using the learners' native language and uses only the target language. According to Richards and Rogers (2001 pp.09-10) teachers must encourage their learners to use foreign language spontaneously in the classroom and "Oral communication skills were built up in a carefully graded progression organized around question-and-answer exchanges between teachers and students in small, intensive classes".

The Audio-lingual Method is based on behaviorist theory, which believes that language learning is a process of forming good habits and avoiding bad ones. “Because it was little concerned with language beyond the sentence level and conversation was simply a way of dressing up pattern practice drills” (Thornbury and Slade, 2006, 251), the Audio-lingual Method relies heavily on drills and fell from popularity and then the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) Method arose.

The origins of CLT are many, one of them is that teachers noticed their students did not learn enough authentic language and knew how to communicate in real situations. Under this circumstance, in the 1970s, this approach developed and became popular afterwards. In the view of CLT, language is a tool to express human thinking and the main purpose of language is to communicate with people. Example activities used in CLT classrooms are information gaps, role play, surveys, interviews and pair / group works. Through these activities, students practice real-life conversations, for example, buying goods in the store or going to see a doctor.

During the 1980s, the task-based language teaching, which is considered to be the strong version of CLT, became a new teaching method that has been widely used in language classrooms. Task-based Learning (TBL) is an approach of language learning that involves doing tasks, for example, eating in a restaurant, asking for directions or hunting a job by using the target language. In the language classroom, TBL provides for natural learning, it is mainly focused on meaning rather than form. As Willis (1996) states, there are six types of task for TBL: Listing and/or brainstorming; Ordering and sorting; Matching; Comparing; Problem-solving; Sharing personal experiences and storytelling. The research findings indicate that because students are free to use what they want for learning and the tasks are familiar to them, they are more likely to participate in and benefit from these activities.

2. Various Definitions

Speaking is one of the four macro skills in addition to listening, reading and writing that are necessary for effective communication language in foreign language learning context. According to Brown (2001), speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning which involves producing, receiving, and processing information. Its meaning and form depend on the context where it occurs including the participants, their collective experiences, the purpose for speaking, and the physical environment. Spratt, Pulverness, and Williams (2011) state that:

“Speaking involves a lot more than just using grammar and vocabulary accurately in speech. When we speak we constantly have in mind the person we are speaking to and our wish to communicate our meaning successfully to them. We use interactive strategies to help us achieve this. These include using body language such as gestures, eye contact, facial expression and movement to put our message across more strongly and clearly, and functions such as clarifying our meaning (...), asking for opinions (...), agreeing (...) to keep the interaction (communication) going and check that it is successful”. (p. 48-49).

For Bygate (1977, 3) one of the basic problems in foreign language teaching is to prepare Learners to be able to use the language. Moreover, Thorunbury (2005) as a natural Integral part of the parson’s daily life has defined Speaking. In other words, it is an activity, which is carried out by both ordinary and specialized people to do their basic functions according to their specific needs. Attempting to illustrate the process of speaking fluently in foreign language, he claims that speaking is a complex skill that involves in addition to the knowledge of vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation a command of skills and another type of knowledge.

3. The Speaking Components

EFL teachers should train students to develop their oral communication. The two factors which could determine the success of English language learners are accuracy and fluency, these two factors are the major criteria to measure the ability to speak in the foreign language.

3.1 Accuracy

In second and foreign language teaching, accuracy refers to the “ability to produce grammatically correct sentences” (J. C. Richards, et al 1992, p. 204). However, J. Harmer (2001, p. 104) pointed that accuracy involves the correct use of vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation, which are considered by S. Thornbury (2000, July, p. 3) as three criteria that most teachers have reliance on concerning the assessment of “learner’s command of the linguistic systems.” Therefore, to be accurate in oral production, to be understood and to gain interest of their interlocutors; learners should pay attention to correctness and completeness of the language form; they should be knowledgeable and master the use of:

- Vocabulary: which mean that learners should study words and know their meanings, their use, also they should be able to distinguish between words classes which are lexical one as nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, or function one as determiners, particles, prepositions...etc. Mastering vocabulary helps learners to be able to select and use the appropriate words, utterances and expressions with the context when speaking.
- Grammatical structures: rules of words order, tenses...etc. This means that learners should know how elements of a sentence are put and work together such as morphemes, phonemes, words, phrases, clauses...etc.
- Correct pronunciation: “production of sounds, stress patters, rhythmic structures and intonation of the language” (Florez, 1999, p.2).

3.2 Fluency

According to P.Skehan as quoted in Thornbery (2000, p. 3) fluency is the “capability to produce language in real time without undue pausing or hesitation”. In other words speaking fluently is the faculty of using the language spontaneously and confidently while communicating one’s thought ideas or opinions in several contexts. It implies talking without making a lot of stops to think too much about what one’s is saying and without worrying too much about errors (accuracy) until it becomes unnatural speech. As pointed by Richards et al (1992, 204) fluency is “the features which give speech the qualities of being natural and normal, including native-like use of pausing, rhythm, intonation, stress, rate of speaking, and use of interjections and interruptions.” Therefore, teachers should rehearse learners to speak in a coherent manner by paying more attention to the meaning and context than to the form in order to achieve oral fluency.

4. Aspects of speaking

Aspects of the speaking skill need to be put into consideration because they pose some challenges and identify some guidelines for understanding this skill and hence design instructional activities to prepare learners to communicate effectively in real life situations,

4.1 Face to face

Most conversations take place face to face which allows speakers to get immediate feedback, i.e. “Do listeners understand? Are they in agreement? Do they sympathize?” (Cornbleet & Carter, 2001, 16). Thus communication through speaking has many characteristics, such as facial expressions, gestures and even body movements. Speaking also occurs, most of the time, in situations where participants or interlocutors are present. Such factors facilitate communication (El Fayoumy, 1997, 10, Widdowson, 1998 & Burns, 1998).

4.2 Interacting

Whether we are speaking face-to –face or over the telephone, to one person or a small group, the wheels of conversation usually turn smoothly, with participants offering

contributions at appropriate moments, with no undue gaps or everyone talking over each other (Bygate, 1998, 30 and Cornbleet & Carter, 2001, 27)

Turn taking, a main feature in interaction, is an unconscious part of normal conversation. “Turn takings are handled and signaled differently across different cultures, thus causing possible communication difficulties in conversation between people of different cultures and languages” (Mc Donough & Mackey, 2000: 84).

4.3 Real time

“During conversations, responses are unplanned and spontaneous and the speakers think on their feet, producing language which reflects this” (Foster et al., 2000, 368). These time constraints affect the speaker's ability to plan, to organize the message, and to control the language being used. Speakers often start to say something and change their mind midway; which is termed a false start. The speaker's sentences also cannot be as long or as complex as in writing. Similarly, “speakers occasionally forget things they intended to say; or they may even forget what they have already said, and so they repeat themselves” (Miller, 2001, 27).

This implies that the production of speech in real time imposes pressures, but also allows freedoms in terms of compensating for these difficulties. The use of formulaic expressions, hesitation devices, self-correction, rephrasing and repetition can help speakers become more fluent and cope with real time demands (Bygate, 1987, 21; Foster et al., 2000 and Hughes, 2002, 76). Actually, exposing students to these spoken discourse features facilitates their oral production and helps them compensate for the problems they encounter. It also helps them sound normal in their use of the foreign language.

5. Speaking difficulties to EFL Learners

In EFL classes, students may face many problems in speaking freely. These problems maybe classified into two types: linguistic problems and psychological problems.

5.1 Linguistic Problems

According to Thonbury (2005, 11) “linguistic knowledge plays an important role in speaking skill”. He also emphasizes that; if any feature from this knowledge is lacking,

students can find problems in participation. These difficulties are: lack of vocabulary, pronunciation mistakes and grammar mistakes.

5.1.1 Lack of Vocabulary

To achieve oral skill students need the appropriate selection of words when they are speaking, and using these words and expression accurately. Thornbury(2005) states that “spoken language also has a relatively high proportion of words and expression” (p.22). Thus, learning foreign languages requires a great knowledge of its vocabulary, the phenomenon in our EFL classes is that many students often find some difficulties when they try to express what they want to say because they find themselves struggling their limited words and expression. Therefore, these limitations of vocabulary affect the amount of their participation in speaking activities.

5.1.2Pronunciation Mistakes

Speaking a language, English, means having a good pronunciation because the way of pronunciation is the first thing that students are judged and evaluated. EFL students have to Practice their pronunciation and to be aware of the different rules of sounds as stress, Intonation ... etc. Bada, Genc & Ozkan (2011) assert the importance of pronunciation in speaking skill “in speaking, they compete with limited time to recall words, and also take care of their pronunciation ... Speaking is often dealt with at pronunciation level” (p. 122). Usually students have unpronounced speech that reflects lack of experience with English sounds, rhythms and words stress and student’s poor listening to native speaker or because of teacher’s miss pronunciation as non-native speaker. Therefore, pronunciation mistakes are one of the main factors that impede the students from doing their speaking activities freely and without any stress. This is the reason that leads to the difficulty of participation.

5.1.3Grammar Mistakes

Grammar knowledge is one of the most important aspects for being good in speaking. EFL students have to achieve this knowledge to improve their participation. As Davies and Pearse (2000, 82) stated, “Many people do not like speaking in front of large groups of people”. It means that in any foreign language, the students worry about making mistakes when they speak in front of the whole class.

5.2 Psychological Problems

According to Thonbury (2005, 24), the psychological barriers of EFL students in oral English communication are the psychological negative emotions that prohibit their performance in English as a foreign language. Students may experience different psychological barriers including lack of self-confidence, anxiety, shyness and fear ... etc.

5.2.1 Mother Tongue Use

Students of the same mother tongue often use it in and outside classroom because they feel comfortable and less exposed to the target language. Learners often use the mother tongue when they could not express themselves in foreign language, so they borrow words from their native language. According to Baker & Westrup (2003), “barriers to learning can occur if students knowingly or unknowingly transfer the cultural rules from their mother tongue to a foreign language.” (p.12). Therefore, this use of mother tongue breaks down the students’ communication in classroom and lessens their speaking abilities. Students always run away from using the foreign language due to the lack of vocabulary in this language.

5.2.2 Low Uneven Participation

This problem refers to the amount of each students talking time. Some students tend to be dominant and take almost the whole students talking time. However, others prefer to speak only if they ensure that what they will say is correct, and some others keep silent, show no interest or participation all along the course.

Harmer (2001) suggests streaming weak participators in groups and letting them work together. In such cases, they will not hide behind the strong participators, and the teacher can achieve a high level of participation. Another factor that can create problem of participation is the classroom arrangement that may not help students to perform some speaking activities. Bowman *et al.* (1989: 40) support the idea by saying that “traditional classroom seating arrangements often work against you in your interactive teaching.” This problem may be related to motivation because some students are not practice if teacher do not motivate them.

5.2.3 Fear of Mistakes

In EFL classes, students cannot express themselves in foreign language and do not participate appropriately in the oral lessons for the reason that they are worried about making mistakes, fearful about public correction. As Ur (2000) states: “Learners are often inhibited about trying to say things in a foreign language in the classroom, worried about making mistakes, fearful of criticism or loosing face, or simply shy of the attention that their speech attracts”.(p. 111). Therefore, fear of making mistakes can considered as another obstacle for students’ participations.

6. Reasons for Teaching Speaking

According to Harmer 2007, teaching speaking can be beneficial for three reasons:

- a.**It gives students occasions for speaking the S. L. to know people namely teachers and classmates within the classroom.
- b.**In teaching speaking students are given tasks where they take the advantage to express their knowledge freely in order to diagnose their strengths as well as their weaknesses.
- c.**Teaching speaking makes all of the kept information about language grammar structures practiced away by learners that, Surly; lead them to speak fluently and without difficulty.

In teaching speaking exercises must be set up by the teacher correctly i.e. suitable for students in order to guarantee their contributions and make them benefit from those exercises.

7. Activities to Enhance the Students' Participation

The discussion below centers on the major types of speaking activities which can be applied in the classroom:

7.1 Role play

Providing a role play in the classroom, is very important in developing students' Oral proficiency. We use term 'role play' to refer to the set of activities in which students take an imaginative leap out of the confines of the classroom, providing a useful spring board for real life language use (Thornbury,2005).

Gillian Porter Ladousse (1987) states the means of 'role play' as words "when students assume a 'role', they play a part (either their own or somebody else's) in a specific situation. 'Play' means that the role is taken on in a safe environment in which students are as inventive and playful as possible" (p. 5).

Consequently, role play is the most enjoyable activity for the students because it is less threatening and it builds up their self confidence. Through role play students can train their Speaking skill in any situation. It also helps many shy students by providing them with a mask and increases their motivation (Ibid). It can be performed from prepared scripts, created from the students themselves, depending on their level. It consists of short scenes which can be realistic or pure fantasy (Klippel, 1983:121).

As a result, to succeed with role play, the teachers have to select topics from the students' interest in order to motivate and bring them to participate more.

7.2 Problem Solving Activity

A problem solving is a classroom activity in which the students are supposed to find solutions for a given problem. According to Klippel (1983):

Problem solving activities demand that the learner themselves decide upon the items to be ranked ... the language which is needed for problem solving activities depends

on the topic of each exercise, but in general students will have to make suggestions, give reasons, and accept, modify suggestions and reasons given by others (p. 103).

Lastly, students find themselves participating and speaking when they are struggling to find solution to the problem that is presented in problem-solving tasks. For example, teacher asks the students to decide the best action and the effective solution is such as: “You see a follow worker in your office steals a portable computer, you know, he/ she is a single parent of two young children and has financial problems” (Pearse & Davies, 2000).

7.3 Discussions and Debates

Discussion and debates are the most commonly activities develop the students’ communicative abilities and to practice the language in different situation. They aim to engage the students’ interest, opinions, histories, and experiences.. Besides that, many teachers argue that the best discussions in classes are those arise spontaneously from topics interest the students and proposed or selected by themselves. It may take just few minutes or take whole lesson. Harmer (2001, 272) argued that discussion, as a speaking task, can be seen as the most useful and interesting form of oral practice in the classroom since it offers opportunities for students to exchange their opinions, talk about their experiences and express their views to develop their communicative ability when using the target language. In this sense Littlewood (1981) states that: “It (discussion) provides learners with opportunities to express their own personality and experience through the foreign language” (p.47). This means that “discussion” is regarded as a real language experience where the students use their abilities in order to deal with such speaking activity. Finally, discussion (debate) has its advantages and benefits:

- 1- It helps and motivates the students to use foreign language, English, to go on conversation and dialogues for long time.
- 2- It provides for the students opportunity to practice the strategies required in interpersonal communication.

3- It is the most successful activity to memorize information since the students are involved in it (Hedge, 2000: 277).

7.4 Conversations

One of the most focus that EFL teachers have to deal with is the emphasis on having students analyze and evaluate the language that they or other produce. The development of conversation skills paves the way to develop the language itself.

According to Thornbury (2005), many language learners feel that developing conversation competence is their most urgent need and their principle objective.

Conclusion

We have attempted through this chapter to focus on speaking skill in general and the difficulties that may face EFL students' participation in the classroom. Teachers have to follow certain strategies to teach students and help them to participate in the classroom, and create some activities that may enhance students' participation. However, many EFL students do not participate because of the above discussion problems in this chapter such as linguistic and psychological problems. More importantly, the application of the different activities such as role-play, problem solving activity, discussion and debates, and so on will enhance the students participation and solve their speaking problems.

Chapter Two

Cooperative Learning

Introduction

In this chapter tackles cooperative learning (CL) as an important technique that can be applied in the classroom situation, its different definitions and origins. This chapter aims also to shed light on its elements, methods, and its benefits. Moreover, this chapter highlights also how cooperative learning can be used by teachers to increase student's motivation.

1. Defining Cooperative Learning

Cooperative Learning (CL) takes many forms and definitions; each of them emphasizing a particular aspect, but all definitions shed lights on its importance.

Slavin, (1995:2) has identified cooperative learning as the “variety of teaching methods in which students work in small groups to help one another learn academic content”. One possible explanation for cooperative learning's success in language teaching is that effective learning often occurs through an individual's speaking and interaction with his or her environment, and language is the means by which learning and meaning are made conscious to the student.

Gomleksiz (1997, p. 1, as cited in Gokkurt, Dundar, Soylu, and Akgun, 2012, P. 3432) reported that:

Cooperative learning is a learning approach that, they are helping each other learn about academic subjects, creating small mixed groups of students in the classroom in accordance with a common purpose and the groups success is rewarded in different ways.

In Language Teaching context, cooperative learning provides students with the opportunity to work together in interactive process to create meaningful learning experiences that may help students develop genuine fluency in another language.

2. Cooperative Learning Elements

According to the Johnson & Johnson model, cooperative learning is instruction that involves students working in teams to accomplish a common goal, under conditions that include the following elements (5):

2.1 Positive Interdependence

Johnson et al (1998, p. 4-7, as cited in Laal, 2013, p. 1434) defines PI as “Positive interdependence is linking students together so one cannot succeed unless all group members succeed. Group members have to know that they sink or swim together.” Through student’s cooperation, the success of the whole group would depend on the success of each member and vice versa. Richards and Rodgers (2001) assert: “Positive interdependence occurs when group members feel that what helps one member helps all and what hurts one member hurts all.” (p.196). Without the help of each member, the team is not able to reach the desired goals.

Johnson & Johnson (1989, 2005 & as cited in Johnson and Johnson, 2008) divided interdependence into three parts: outcome, means, and boundary. First outcome, which is considered as the general goal and aim behind any cooperation process to achieve academic tasks or whatever. Secondly, the shared outcomes finished successfully include the required actions on the part of group members, because means interdependence contain related elements that cannot separated from each other such as resource, role, and task interdependence. Third, the boundaries between individuals and groups clearly determine who is interdependent with whom.

Social interdependence theory believes that cooperation is a result of positive interdependence among individuals’ goals. Positive interdependence according to Johnson

and Johnson (2008) can be found only in cooperative environments where individuals perceive that they can reach their goals only if the other individuals with whom they are working cooperatively also reach their goals. They therefore promote each other's efforts to achieve their goals. However, positive interdependence is often absent in competitive classroom where individuals perceive that they can obtain their goals only if the other individuals fail to obtain their goals to be replaced by negative interdependence.

2.2 Individual Accountability

Individual accountability involves both individual and group performance (Richards & Rodgers 2001). It is the belief that each member in group is responsible for his/her performance as well as the work of their teammates (Laal, Geranpaye, & Daemi, 2013, p. 288). Each student will be accountable for his/her learning as well as the group learning and performance. Johnson and Johnson (2008) found that positive independence is designed to create responsibility forces that may help teammates to develop sense of responsibility and accountability and simplify the teammate's tasks. This sense of responsibility motivates students to work harder to reach their goals. Individual accountability exists when the performance of each individual member is assessed, the results given back to the individual and the group to compare against a standard of performance (Johnson and Johnson, 2008, p. 22-23).

"If individual accountability is highly organized students cooperation will achieve more academic tasks" (Hooper et al, 1989, as cited in Johnson and Johnson, 2008). The lack of individual accountability decrease feelings of personal responsibility. If students may feel that their shared outcomes will not be reached, because of the lack of team cohesiveness, members' contributions and responsibility; consequently, they start reduce their contributions to their teams. However, if there is high individual accountability and group cohesiveness, each student will be responsible for the final outcome and make their efforts as much as possible for the team project contribution, because each individual will be accountable for.

2.3 Promotive Interaction

Another important principle of cooperative learning is the emphasis of small group interaction to promote students cooperation rather than competition to one another (Richards and Rodgers, 2001). Johnson and Johnson (2008, p. 23) state that “promotive interaction occurs as individuals encourage and facilitate each other’s efforts to accomplish the group’s goals”. For effective communication, students need to cooperate with each other to achieve the shared outcomes. Promotive interaction help students in providing assistance, efficient information and materials, feedback, higher quality decision, influencing students each other’s efforts to reach mutual tasks, and the most important students trusting and trustworthy (Johnson and Johnson 1999, as cited in Johnson and Johnson, 2008). According to Jolliffe (2007) face-to-face interaction, which is preferably used for effective communication, can take place in two aspects; the physical closeness or eye-to-eye contact. The latter develops students thinking skills, since they are expected to help each other, collaborate, explain and teach what they know to class mates, through all forms of oral exchange.

2.4 Appropriate Use of Social Skills

Another important principle of cooperative learning is the appropriate use of social skills, which clearly identify how students interact with each other as groups (Richards and Rodgers, 2001). A student does not know how to interact effectively with his classmates, and social skills like other skills should be taught and reinforced. According to Johnson and Johnson (2008) interpersonal and small group skills shape the individuals’ necessary connection. As a result, individuals must have the interpersonal and small group skills that are very necessary for effective cooperation and motivation, in order to be able to work productively and overcoming together any kinds of pressure. According to (Johnson and Johnson, 2008):

The more socially skillful participants are, the more social skills are taught and rewarded, and the more individual feedback participants receive on their use of the skills, the higher tends to be the achievement and productivity in cooperative groups.

(p. 25)

Social skills are needed to ensure successful interaction, and the necessary individual feedback promoted the highest achievement and productivity in interactional environment.

2.5 Group Processing

According to Johnson and Johnson (2008, p. 25) “Group processing may be defined as reflecting on a group session to: (a) describe what member actions were helpful and unhelpful and (b) make decisions about what actions to continue or change”. Group processing involves students“ reflecting on the group’s work and the way they interact with each other by focusing on members“ contribution and eliminating ineffective group activities, in order to help them work effectively and efficiently to reach the group’s academic tasks. Furthermore, Richards and Rodgers (2001, p. 196) maintain that group formation is an important factor in creating positive interdependence, and many factors can be included in setting up groups:

a. Group size: generally group size is from two to four students. This depends on the nature of the learning tasks, learners’ age, and the available time.

b.Assigning students to groups: groups can be, random, students-selected, or teacher-selected, which seems as the favorably one.

c.Selecting students’ role in groups: each student has its particular role to play such as noise monitor, recorder, summarizer, or turn-taker monitor.

3. Methods of Using Cooperative Learning

Most of the students do not feel confident to deliver speeches, make presentations, or just simply converse with their teachers and classmates using English. As a result, many cooperative learning methods are available. It is now possible for teachers to select from a wide variety of cooperative methods to achieve different teaching outcomes. Some of these methods, which have been extensively researched and widely used, are Student team-Achievement Division, Jigsaw and Group Investigation.

3.1 Student Team-Achievement Divisions (STAD)

This method was created by Slavin in 1978. In STAD, the simplest of the Student Team Learning methods, students are supposed to work in teams of four- or five-member. Each team represents a sample of the whole class, made up of students of different gender, level of intelligence, racial or ethnic backgrounds (Salvin, 1991).When designing groups, teachers should pay attention to gender, ethnicity, and performance level, and the most important teachers should weekly introduce new materials to the lecture so that students discuss it in group as a worksheet material to make sure that all team members have mastered the lesson. After a period of team practice, all students take individual quizzes. Although, students study together, they are not allowed to help each other with the quizzes. This individual accountability motivates students to do their best by explaining to each other as the only way to ensure team success is for all team members to master the information and the skills being taught.

The success is based on improvement points; that is, students' quiz scores are compared to their own past average, and points are given to each team based on the degree to which students work harder and perform better than their own earlier performance. Student Teams-Achievement Divisions is one of the simplest of all cooperative learning methods, that help teacher to create a procedural change in the classroom in the sense that students begin to see the teacher as a knowledge source more than just a boss, classroom learning activities as funny and social phenomenon more than boring and isolated, and the most important they start making sense of camaraderie atmosphere in the classroom because they need to interact with each other and this interaction exceed all the racial, gender, or ethnic barriers to create new friendships.

3.2 Teams-Games-Tournament (TGT)

Teams-Games-Tournament seems to be identical to STAD, since it uses the same teacher presentation, teamwork, instructional format, but TGT replaces the quizzes with weekly tournaments, in which students play individual academic games to show their

personal understanding of subject matter. Students compete with members of other teams to contribute points to their team scores and strive to be better than the rest of the groups. Students compete "tournament tables" at three-person against other team. For example, the Fantastic Four high achiever might compete with Pirates and Superstars high achievers. Another competition can be made between average achievers of the different teams as well as low achievers, and the winner at each tournament table brings the same number of points to his or her team. After weeks from competition, the top-scoring team will be the winner (Salvin, 1991).

3.3 Jigsaw

The original Jigsaw was first developed by Elliot Aranson and his students in 1978 at Texas and California University at Santa Cruz (Salvin 1991).As a form of cooperative learning, the jigsaw method is a teaching strategy that helps students to develop skills for working effectively in teams, an important competency for socio-environmental synthesis (S-E synthesis). The Jigsaw method requires students to work on mixed teams of six students with five sections of academic material. At the beginning, each team member is supposed to read his particular section, and then students of different teams who share the same section discuss it in expert groups. Later on students go back to their teams and start explaining the discussed section to their colleges who need to pay attention and carefully listen to another's work. Johns Hopkins University developed later on Jigsaw to become Jigsaw II, which seems to be easier for teachers than the old one, because teachers are not supposed to rewrite for each curriculum. In Jigsaw II students are supposed to work in teams of four to five students as in STAD and TGT, but here all students share the same section through reading a book chapter, a short story, or other units to read. In expert groups, students who share the same topic discuss it together and share later on the whole information with their team members. Then, through the improvement score system of STAD, students tested individual quizzes about the curriculum to select the highest-scoring teams and individuals.

3.4 Team Accelerated Instruction (TAI)

Team Accelerated Instruction (TAI) is a combination of individualized instruction and team learning. As in STAD, TGT, and Jigsaw, students are supposed to work together in teams. However, in TAI students need to work on their own levels and rates, because they are placed in individualized mathematics materials from addition to algebra, in which team members help and check each other's achievement against answer sheets. Final unit tests are taken without teammate help and are scored by student monitors. Teachers need to total each week the number of units completed by all team members and give certificates or other team rewards to teams that exceed a criterion score based on the number of final tests passed. The teams and the monitors are responsible for managing the learning atmosphere, so that teachers feel more comfortable to work with individuals and homogeneous math groups (Salvin 1991).

4. The benefits of Cooperative Learning

a.It encourages students to think about their learning processes, identify the limitations of their knowledge and learn to seek. It is particularly suited to large problem-solving tasks and search projects in which there is more work to be carried out than one person can reasonably be expected to do in the available time, or where more than one person is needed to manipulate equipment, perform experiments or collect and analyze data (Killen, 2009).

b.Cooperation teaches students to be less reliant on the teacher and more reliant on their own ability to think, to seek information from other sources and to learn from other students (Killen, 2009).

c.When compared with lecture and discussion activities, cooperative learning can lead to students being frustrated less often, getting confused less often, feeling more intellectually challenged, feeling more actively involved in learning and looking forward to class more often (Killen, 2009).

d.Cooperative learning emphasizes democratic thought and practice as a desirable way for people to interact. (Killen, 2009).

e.Cooperative learning ensures that all students are socially integrated into networks of positive peer relationships. This can lead to reductions in antisocial behavior such as bullying. (Killen, 2009).

5. Cooperative Learning and Motivation

Motivation is a significant contributor to learners' academic career. However, trying to motivate learners to learn a foreign language is a challenging task for teachers. Deitte and Howe (2003: 280 as cited in Bouguerne, S, dissertation. 2011;109) states, "Student motivation is an essential component of successful student learning, but it is also one of the most challenging areas for teachers." Lampert (2001, 1 as cited in Bouguerne, S, Dissertation. 2011:110) .Thus means, teacher have to know the tools that motivate his/her students like cooperative learning. Teachers must also be aware of students' emotional needs as well as the intellectual needs. Mc Groarty (1996: 11 as cited in Bouguerne, S, Dissertation. 2011:110) directs attention to the fact that:

"When membership in a specific linguistic or ethnic group has relevance for language study as a part of the curriculum, it is important to examine group as well as individual motivations, which contribute to initial choice, persistence, and success in language study".

In summary, it appears from the previous views that CL is a significant component in enhancing learners' motivation. Therefore, teachers can use a variety of CL techniques to establish a strong link between students' personalities and their engagement in the learning process.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have seen that cooperative learning is a structured group learning in which learners get responsible for their own learning as well as for the learning of others. In addition, cooperative learning in language learning effectively supports

affective factors that correlate positively to language learning such as how it reduces learners' anxiety, encourages their self-esteem and self confidence and raises their motivation so that promotes interaction in the classroom and develops oral proficiency . Although, there is no 'perfect methodology', CL is an instructional method which is effective in enhancing the acquisition of English speaking skills and improving students' attitudes.

CHAPTER Three

Methodology and Results

Introduction

This chapter provides a detailed description of both classroom observation and the interviews concerning their design, aims, and population and includes the analysis of the data obtained from classroom observation, and both students' and teachers' interview. Finally, a summary of the results obtained from the observation and the interview is included.

2. Description and Analysis of Classroom Observation

To investigate whether EFL teachers at Hassi-Messaoud in JILALI LIYABES secondary school implement cooperative learning technique and obtain valid data about the ways they use in implementing this technique in their classrooms in teaching speaking, we carried out an observation to explore what goes on between people inside the classroom.

2.1 Description of classroom observation

The observation was carried out in second year EFL classroom at Hassi-Messaoud high school during the month of April of the scholar year 2016-2017. The observation aim is twofold. The first aim is to explore the extent of using cooperative learning technique by EFL teachers at the Foreign Languages stream at Hassi-Messaoud High School and the second aim is to explore how they implement it in teaching oral skill in the classroom.

The physical settings, learners' interactive behaviors and the teacher's actions were observed by means of observation checklist (grid) from the dissertation of Benfatah Fatma Zohra for over eight sessions which include around 30 pupils. In these eight sessions cooperative learning was implemented in six sessions. In the two remaining sessions, individualistic approaches were used by the teacher. The observation is presented in a form of checklist which contains certain items to guide the observation. The checklist consists of three sections; the first section is designed to observe the learning environment, the second

section is designed to guide the observation of the groups progressing and the last section is devoted to observe the teacher's roles and actions.

2.1.1. Section one: general observation of the classroom.

Section one in the observation checklist consists of five items (categories). It attempts to obtain real data about some aspects of the classroom environment in which cooperative learning was implemented such as its physical management, the grouping of students, and the group size.

2.1.2. Section two: general observation of the groups

Section two contains six items. It attempts to explore what learners are doing while they are working in cooperative groups. For example, whether learners are introducing different facts and ideas, whether they show willingness to work with peers, whether learners criticize each other's thoughts and contributions, whether they remain on the task using the target language and whether there exist some students in the groups who did not participate in the learned task.

2.1.3. Section three: general observation of the teacher

Section three contains six items. It attempts to explore the different roles of the teacher in the classroom such as whether he assigns roles, suggests topics, motivates learners to collaborate for the achievement of a common goal, monitors learners' behaviors, gives instructions to direct the learners' work, moves around the groups and gives feedback.

3. Selection of Classroom Activities

During the observed sessions, the teacher chooses to use oral presentations and discussion activities in order to engage all the learners in the communicative activities, and to make them participate and interact in the classroom. Wrench et al. (2009) declared that one of the academic needs which ensure better learning is student engagement in learning activities. The choice of the topics reveals the teacher's experience in teaching speaking skill.

4. The analysis of the observation.

Section one: general observation of the classroom

Item one: The physical setting is clean and large enough so that it allows for the success of the cooperative task

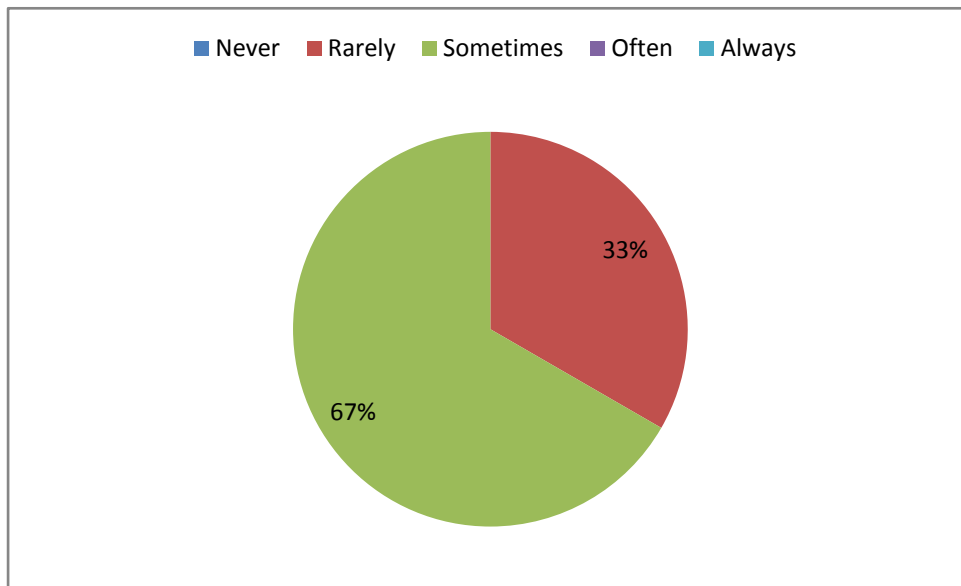


Figure 01: The appropriateness of the physical environment for cooperative learning

It seems from the obtained results that the physical settings in which cooperative learning was implemented by the teacher were sometimes appropriate for cooperative learning and it is rarely that they were not appropriate.

The majority of sessions we have attended took place in large enough and organized rooms in which the problem faced is moving tables and chairs by students to get closer to each other and form circles around tables which results in noise and time wasting.

Items Two & Three: Learners grouped by themselves randomly

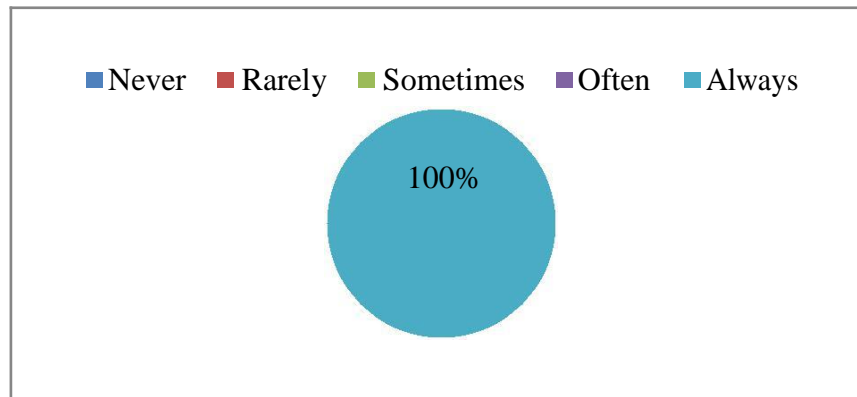


Figure 02: The grouping of pupils randomly by themselves

The figure above reveals that in all the observed sessions in the groups were always formed by students in a random way. Other say, in one group you may find mixed abilities, mixed gender students and in another group you may find members of the same age, the same gender and the same ability.

Besides that, we noticed that the teacher did not get involved in the grouping of students may be because they think that by giving the chance to students to choose with whom they want to work helps in creating relaxed atmosphere within the groups, reduces shyness, increases learners' motivation to collaborate and reduces groups' conflicts.

However, it has been proved by Kagan (2009) that teams that include high, middle, and low ability students, gender diversity and a linguistic and ethnic diversity are better in developing positive peer tutoring and aid in managing the classroom and ease the acquisition and introduction of new information and improve student's ethnic and social relations.

Item Four: The time spent in physical management of the classroom is acceptable.

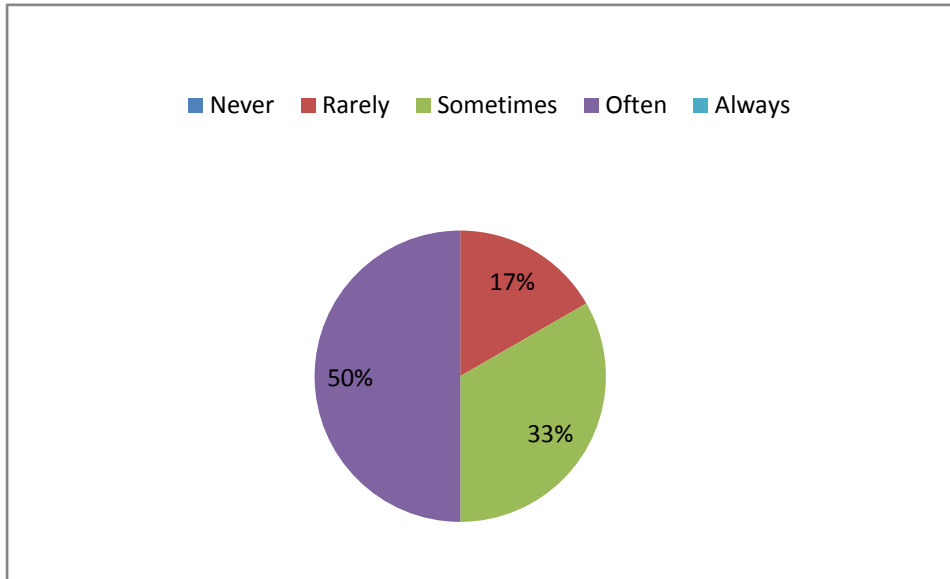


Figure 03: The acceptability of the time spent in classroom management

The obtained results show that in all the attended sessions the teacher and students often spend an acceptable time in rearranging the classroom to become appropriate for cooperative structures. For example, in the majority of sessions the time spend did not pass five minutes because learners showed great responsibility to manage their time to finish their work on time, especially in the sessions in which the groups presented their role plays which they have discussed in small groups; however, in some sessions the time reached around ten minutes, because the physical settings required more management than the other rooms.

Item Five: Groups consist of no more than six pupils

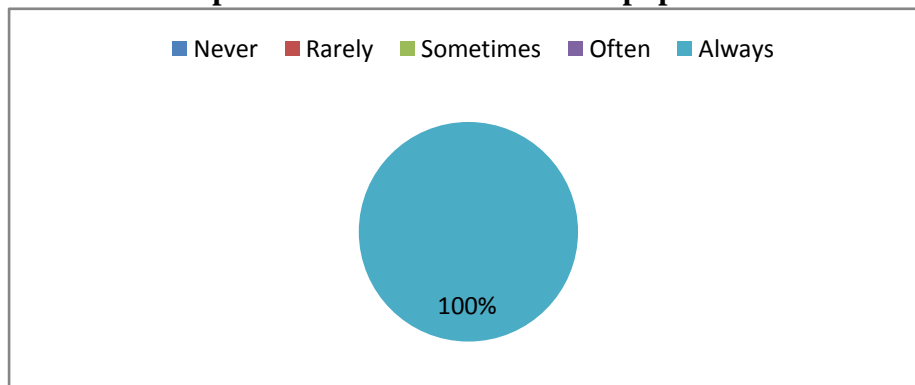


Figure 04: The groups' size

The observation of the classroom during cooperative learning lessons reveal that teachers used groups of four to five students and rarely the number of teammates reaches

six members and this appears clearly in figure four (04). The results reveal also that the number of group members is always delimited by the teacher. For example, during the first sessions we attended teacher asked students to be in groups of four or five students.

Teachers perhaps prefer groups of four to five students because they are aware that groups of this size are large enough to increase interaction between group members and small enough to allow each group member to participate and provide the teacher the opportunity to monitor their behaviors.

Gillies (2003) agrees that the optimal size for successful cooperative groups seem to be three to four members, because in small groups of this size students can be involved more in the task and have enough opportunity to talk and discuss and can be observed by the teacher easily.

Section two: general observation of the groups

Item One: Learners introduce facts, give opinions, provide suggestions and give information

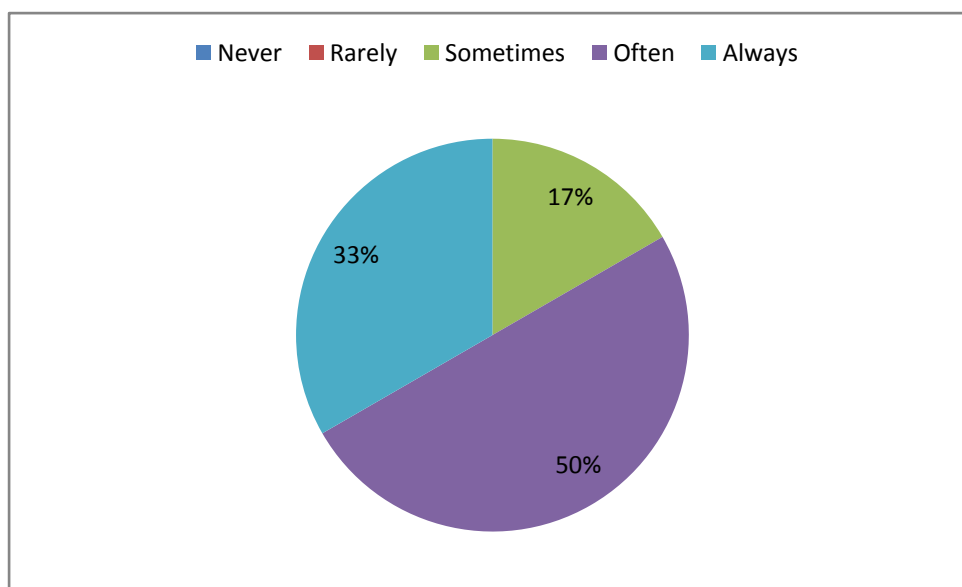


Figure 05: Learners' participation in the taught task

The results presented in the figure five (05) above reveal in each group all teammates often participated in the task at least once. For example, in one of the observed sessions,

each group of students was given a small card on which a topic is written down to be discussed by group members to be developed by them in a form of a role play; when moving around the groups we noticed that in each group each of the students introduced at least one idea for the success of the groupwork, but the participation among learners was relative and not equal; the group leader and students with high language proficiency were those who participated more.

These results proved that learners in all the groups develop high individual and group accountability which is one of the features of cooperative learning which distinguishes it from group work.

Item Two: Learners show readiness and motivation to work with peers and feel comfortable within the group

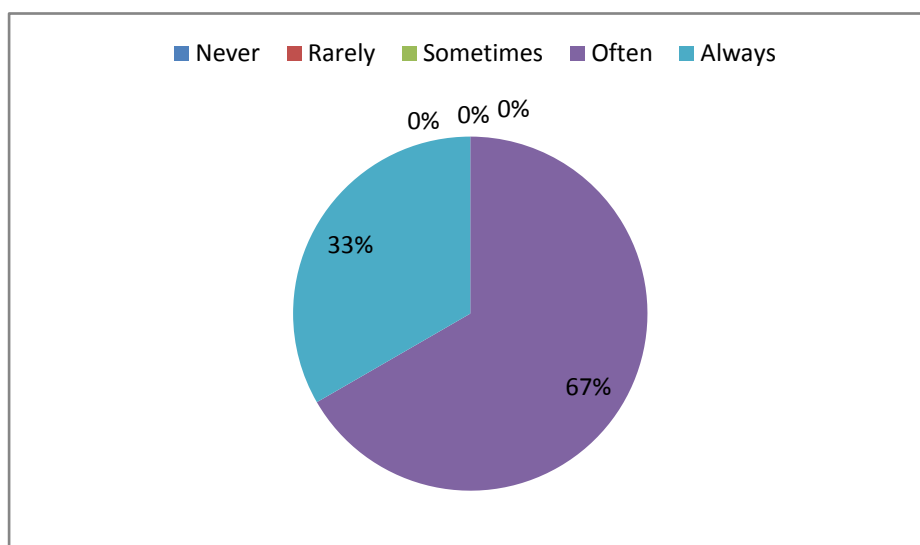


Figure 06: Learners' positive attitudes towards working with peers

The above figure confirms in most observed sessions, learners showed readiness and motivation to work with peers in small groups. When we were observing learners while they work in groups we noticed that learners were relaxed and motivated to work and participate to achieve their common goal and this reflects their positive attitudes towards working in small groups. In a session we attended, the teacher asked students to suggest something to do because some of their teammates were absent, some students suggested a group game

and the entire classroom agreed with this idea and showed positive attitudes towards working within small groups.

Item Three: Existence of some shy and stragglng students who did not cooperatewith the other group members

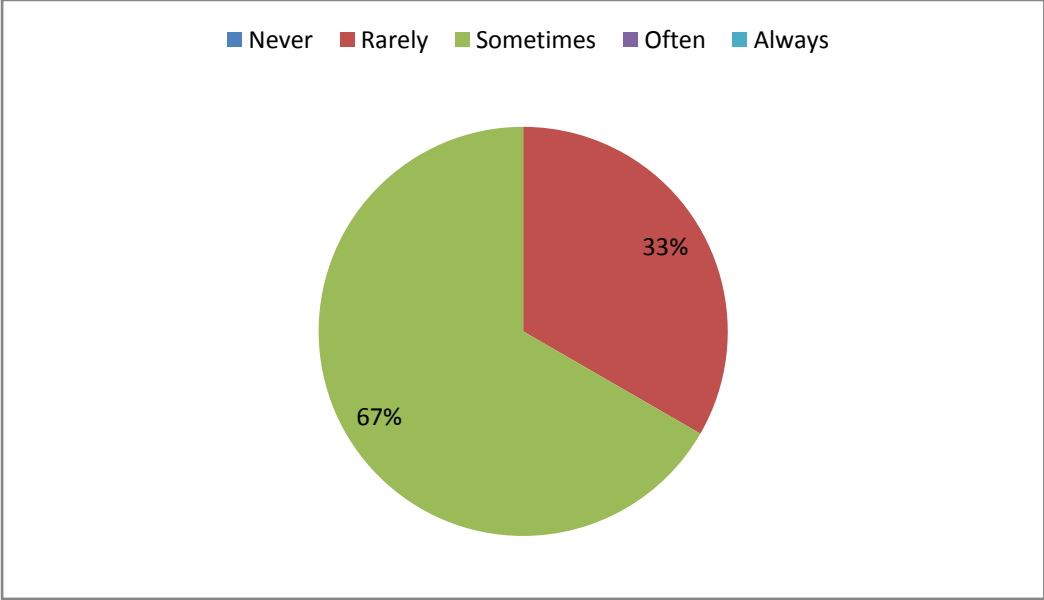


Figure 07: Existence of shy and struggling pupils in the groups

The results in the figure above reveal that almost all the groups during the attended sessions sometimes contain some students who did not contribute in the task by suggesting solutions or giving opinions. Students were silent may be because they were shy or not interested in the topic. However, it is rarely to observe some groups that were well managed groups in which members take turns regularly.

The problem of having some members in certain groups do not participate can be reduced if the teacher monitors the groups to get learners feel that they are observed by the teacher so that they will make more efforts to participate or if teammates support those shy students and encourage them to speak.

Item Four: Learners show feelings of responsibility towards other groupmembers' work and support silent students to participate in the speaking task

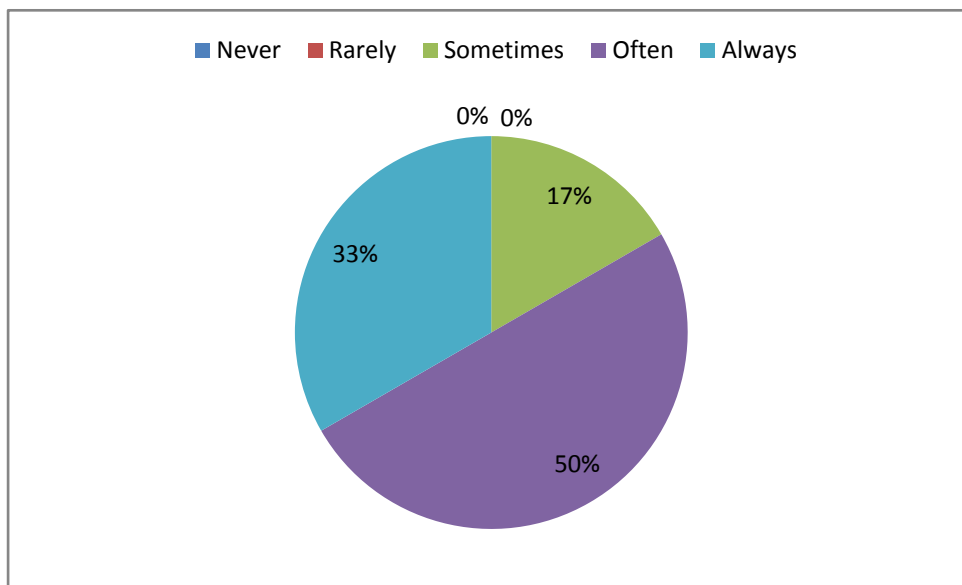


Figure 08: Learners' responsibility and support of each other

The figure above shows that learners in almost all the groups were often responsible for their own and each others' work; they all have specific assigned roles to do and each of them was making his efforts to do that role by introducing new thoughts or supporting silent students to contribute in the teamwork.

The observation reveals also that some groups include some members who were not interested in working on the task but otherwise they were talking about life topics in Arabic and often gave the responsibility to the group leader to ask students who did not contribute to collaborate and assign students to remain on the task and if they did not collaborate he find himself doing the task alone and responsible to complete it on time.

Item five: Learners evaluate the usefulness of each other's contributions and donot criticize the opinions of each other

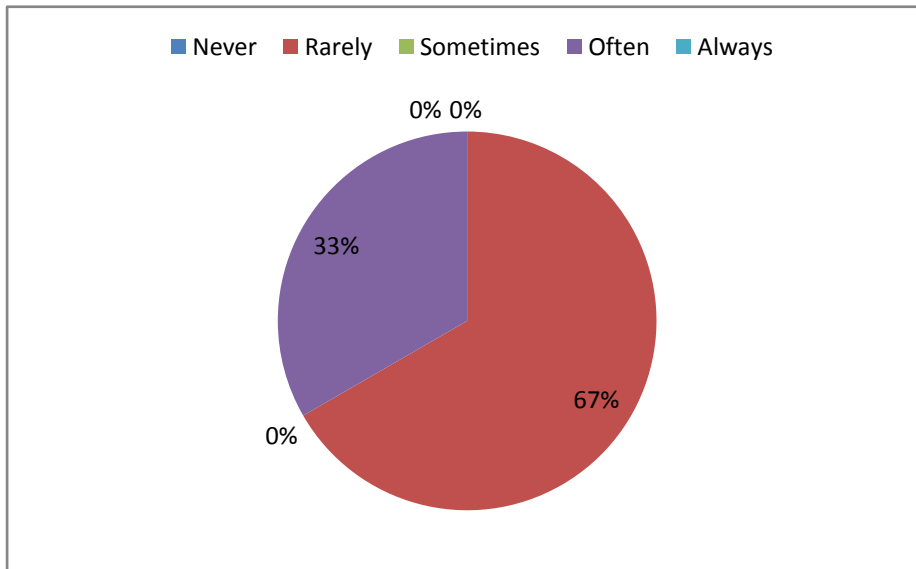


Figure 09: Learners positive evaluation of each other's contributions

The figure above reveals that learners in different groups rarely contribute to correct each other' mistakes and provide direct feedback for their mates and if it exists, it was often positive. In other words, learners did not criticize the ideas of their mates or laugh if a mistake is done by one of them to cause conflicts between the group mates this may be because all members often do the same kind of mistakes and none of them is proficient than others as well as they work as a team in which they are not just individuals but as one unit.

Item Six: Learners discuss the topic in their mother tong and notin English

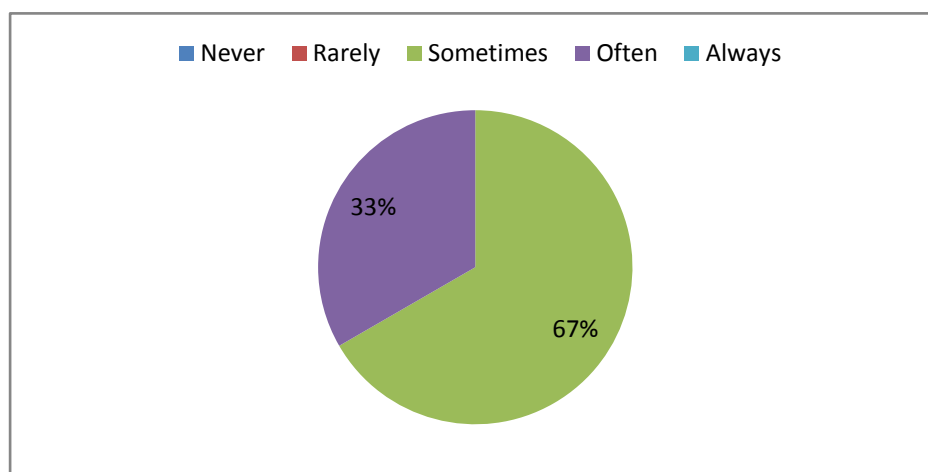


Figure 10: Learners discuss the topic in their mother tongue and notin English

The observation reveal that learners make use of the mother tongue (Arabic) concerning dividing the work between group mates, giving directions and asking for help, especially during the first session we attended in the first classroom. The use of Arabic language may be explained by certain reasons. First, learners feel more comfortable when they speak in Arabic as well as they succeed often in explaining their ideas to their mates when they speak in Arabic more than they do in English. Another possible reason is that some learners do not have the appropriate vocabulary that allows them to speak in English; in addition, to their fear of making pronunciation mistakes so that their group mates make fun of them.

The extent of using Arabic by learners was reduced in the two following sessions because learners get familiar with working with each other and they had a long time to search and learn the vocabulary of their topics during the spring holidays as well as they started their oral presentations in front of the entire class.

Section Three: General Observation of the Teacher

Item One: Teacher assigns roles and gives directions for each group member

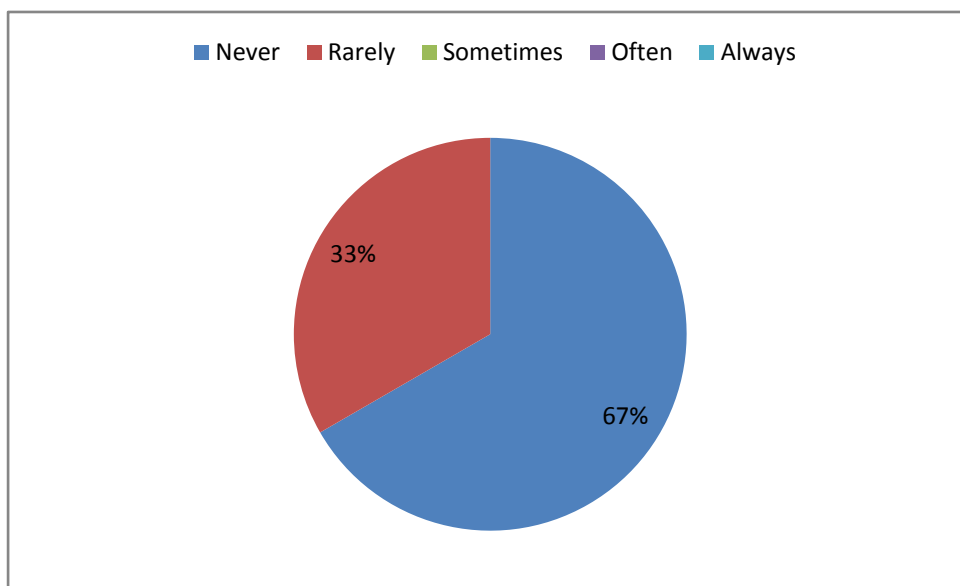


Figure11: The teacher assignments of roles for group members

The figure above shows that teachers do not contribute in the groups' work to assign roles for individual members and they had only asked learners to be in random groups and explained the taught task for them and left the choice of group leader and division of the work between group mates to students. This may be because teachers think that this reduces group problems such as learners are not satisfied by their roles in the group, they are not interested in working with those mates or they complain about their group leader's behaviors.

Item 02: Teacher interacts with learners and suggests topics for discussion

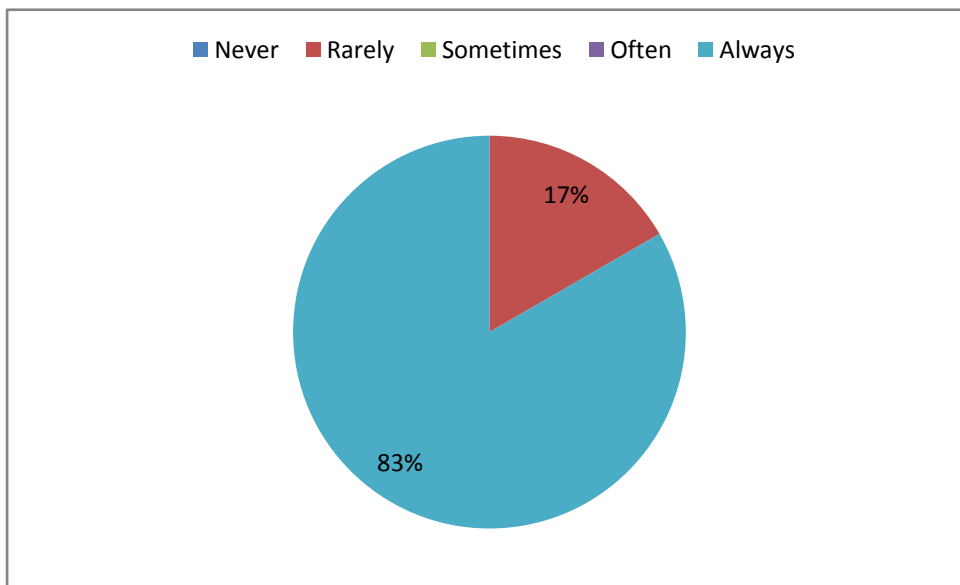


Figure12: Teacher-learner interaction in cooperative classroom

The figure above reveals that teacher-learner interaction was present in almost all the observed sessions. For example, in the first session the teacher administers for pupils a number of papers in each paper contain a given topic, and then she distributed these papers among groups. After the groups read their own topics, the teacher started asking students about their attitudes about these topics and students started also asking their teacher about difficult terms and expressions and requested the needed clarification. The teacher then explained for groups the main objective of the lesson which is developing learners' knowledge about how to express complaint and apology in English and set down some guidelines to direct the groups' work. The teacher suggested the topics because she knows that students have enough time to collaborate and discuss the topics together inside and outside the classroom to develop the appropriate knowledge and skills to do the role play in

coming sessions. However, in the second session the choice of the topic was given to students because the groups have only half hour to discuss and it is better if students choose topics on which they are interested and have enough knowledge about to be able to finish the work on time.

In the last session in which students presented the discussed topics orally, teacher-learner interaction was higher than it was in the two previous sessions because after each group presented his role play, each individual in the group was asked by the teacher certain questions and criticisms and they responded accordingly.

Item Three: Teacher motivates students to express their ideas by some motivating expressions

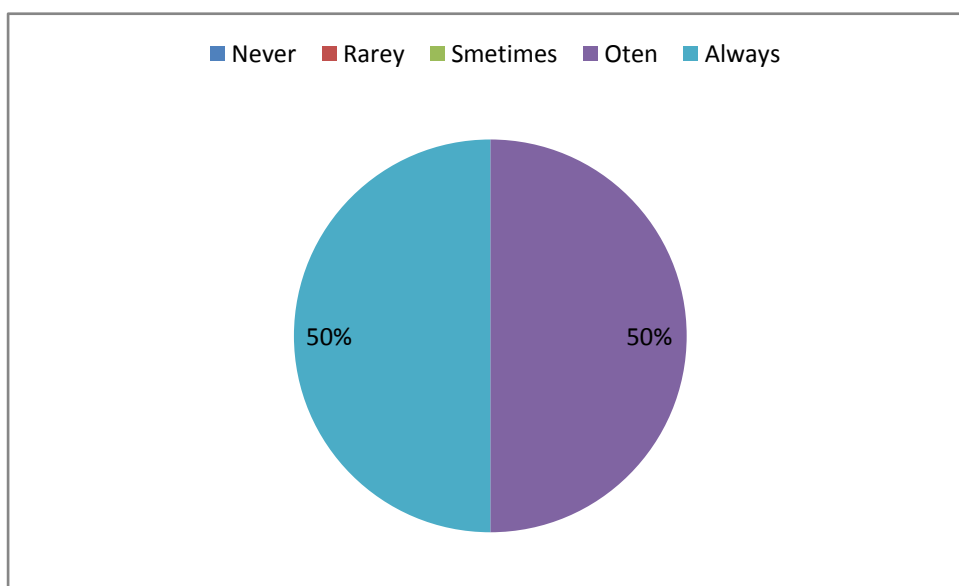


Figure 13: Motivating pupils to express their ideas by the teacher

The results in the figure above reveal that teachers during the six observed sessions often motivate their students to speak using different encouraging words and expressions. Also, they often show their learners that they are observing how they are progressing on the task and that increases their efforts to contribute and participate to be praised by the teacher. Encouraging and motivating students by the teacher often increases their efforts to participate more to develop their language proficiency and their learning grades.

Items Four and Five: The teacher moves around groups and monitors learners' behaviors in the groups

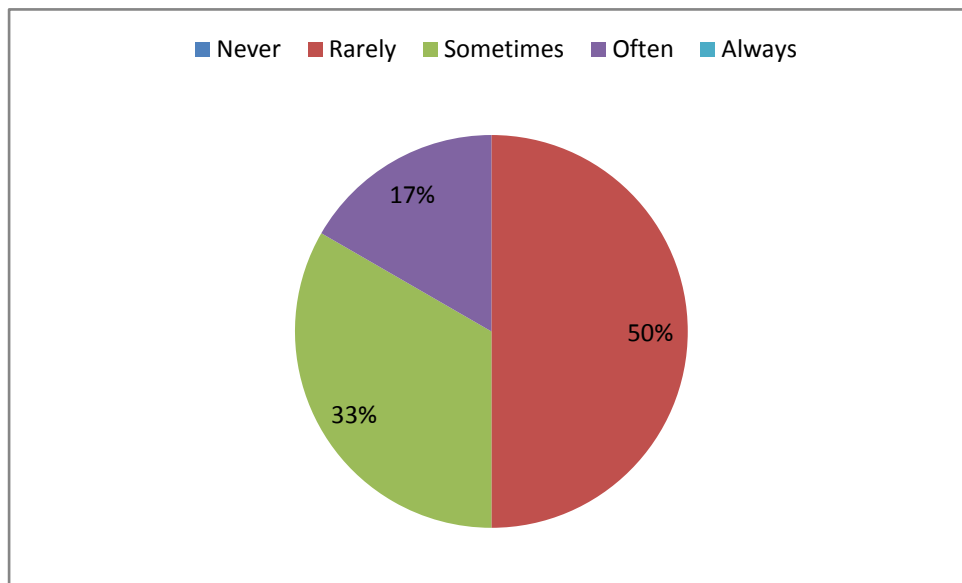


Figure 14: Moving around the groups and monitoring pupils' behaviors

The observation of the teacher during six continuing sessions revealed that teachers rarely contribute in the work of the groups to provide assistance or to give some guidelines as well as rarely moves around groups to monitor learners' behaviors. This may be because cooperative structures often support noise in the classroom and the organization of the classroom doesn't allow the teacher to move around to see how well groups were functioning because tables were next to each other.

Item Six: The teacher assesses the groups' work

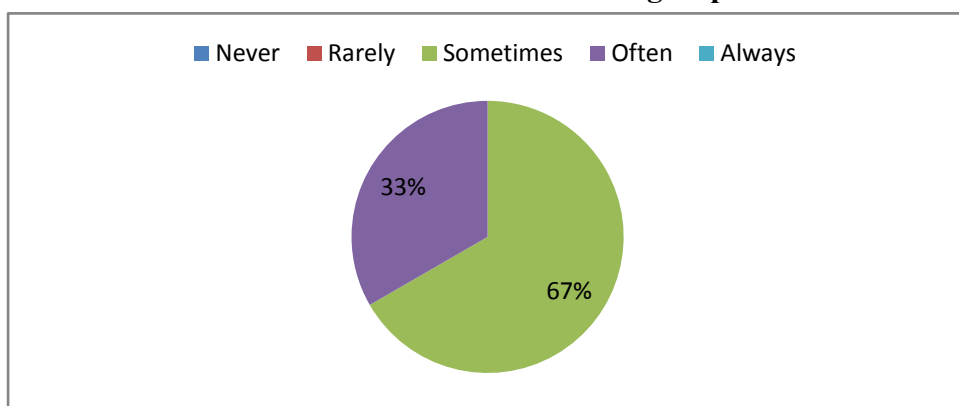


Figure 15: Assessing the groups' work

The observation reveal that the teacher sometimes assess their learners work and progress through observing them either from near or far places. Also, the observation

showed that groups after each oral presentation were assessed by the teacher either as individual members or as a whole group as well as provided by feedback which is important for students since it motivates those who were praised and those who were criticized to do more in next times.

Even though classroom observation provided us with the opportunity to observe groups while they were working and real life data, our focus on moving around the groups was superior on observing the teacher because it was difficult for us to observe all the groups and the teacher during the same time. Moreover, because the number of the attended sessions may not be sufficient, it may not be helpful in generalizing the results obtained. Consequently, we have held an interview: teachers' interview.

5. Description and Analysis of Teachers' Interview

To explore how teachers implement cooperative learning technique, discover the problems they often face in implementing such technique and get insights into their attitudes towards using cooperative learning technique in teaching speaking skill, an interview was held with five teachers.

5.1. Design and description of the interview.

This interview is held with five (05) English teachers in the Branch of Foreign Languages at Hassi-Messaoud secondary school. It aims to investigate whether cooperative learning technique is implemented by EFL teachers to explore how they implement such effective technique in teaching oral skill. Teachers' interview aims also to discover some cooperative learning implementation difficulties and attempts to suggest relevant solutions for successful implementation. Our interviewees were asked thirteen (13) questions from the dissertation of Benfatah Fatma Zohra. First of all, they were asked about their currently held degrees, their period of teaching EFL in secondary school in general and speaking skill in particular. Also, they were asked about the techniques they often use in teaching speaking skill.

Moreover, teachers were asked if they use cooperative learning technique in their courses and how often they do so. In addition, we have asked the interviewees certain questions concerning the implementation of cooperative learning technique such as; do they spend long time in preparing cooperative lessons?, do they ask their students to work in small groups or in pairs?, how do their students form groups?, which group size they find optimal?, and how much time they spend in the rearrangement of the classroom?. Furthermore, teachers were asked about their student's motivation towards working in small groups, the problems they face when they assign their learners to work in groups and their reactions to control needless behaviors and their roles in the success of cooperative lessons. Finally, teachers were asked about how they assess the groups work.

5.2. Analysis of teachers' interview.

Question one: Which degree do you hold?

Three of our interviewees responded that they have held currently the Master degree; however, two of them said that they are new graduated students and their currently held degree is the License degree.

Question Two: For how long have been teaching EFL at Secondary level? And for how long have you been teaching speaking skill?

The interviewees range between new and experienced teachers. Two of our interviewees responded that they have been teaching EFL at High School for three (03) to Four (04) years , two have been teaching EFL for two(02) to one (01) years and only one of the interviewees responded that he has been teaching English at High School for two (02) months;. Our teachers' different experiences and held degrees will benefit us a lot to get insights into the main ways teachers use in implementing cooperative learning technique in teaching speaking skill in order to be able to fill in gaps that often cause problems for both learners and teachers when cooperative learning technique is implemented.

Question Three: What are the learning techniques that you often use in teaching?

The majority of the interviewees responded that they vary their teaching techniques in their courses and all of them stated that the main techniques they usually use are role plays, free discussions, collaborative learning technique, listening comprehension and intensive reading techniques. For example one of the interviewees said that he often uses different techniques according to the learned material; for example, uses role plays to teach learners the communicative aspects of the target language and develop learners' speaking skill and uses audio tapes to teach listening comprehension. Varying the teaching techniques by EFL teachers increases the possibility of developing learners' skills in general and speaking skill in particular because having different students in the classroom means that each student has his own learning style and interest. In other words, one student may learn more in cooperation and another student learns more in individualistic situations.

Question four: Do you use cooperative learning technique? If yes how often?

All the interviewees responded that they do use sometimes cooperative learning technique and they all argued that the use of such technique often depends on the topic tackled and the learning task and its purposes. For example, one of the interviewees stated that: "Yes I do use this technique at least three times a month. In fact it depends on the task and its purpose." This confirms that some EFL teachers are aware of the positive effects cooperative learning may have on learners' oral performance.

Question Five: When you decide to use cooperative learning, does preparation of cooperative lesson take time?

The majority of our interviewees agrees that the preparation of cooperative lesson does not need long time, and pointed out that what it needs really from the teacher is to be intelligent in choosing the matters which cooperative learning technique is useful for more than other techniques, because the success of any lesson depends on the harmony between the learned matter and the used technique.

Question Six: When you apply cooperative learning, do you ask your students to work in small groups or in pairs?

The majority of our interviewees confirmed that they usually use both techniques, but the main cooperative learning structure they rely on more is small groups. For example, one of the teachers said that the choice of using small groups or pairs is often determined by the learning task, but in most times we use group work. The fact that teachers prefer to ask students to work in small groups in favor of pairs may be related to the increased interaction created when learners work in small groups of four to five members maximum and facilitates for them monitoring the groups unlike in pair the opportunity to observe all the pairs is less and it cannot be possible because of time limitation.

Question Seven: Do you group your students or you give them the chance to group themselves? And how many students you prefer to be in each group?

All the teachers we have interviewed confirmed that they always let their learners choose their teammates in order to create harmony in the groups and to facilitate interaction between peers. Our interviewees pointed out also that they often ask students to be in groups of three to five or four to five students. One of the interviewees said: “I let my students choose themselves in order to work at their ease and each group contains four to five students so that they can exchange information and learn from each others.”

Question Eight: How much time do you often spend in rearranging your classroom to be appropriate for cooperative learning?

All interviewees declared that the time they spend in rearranging the classroom and getting students form groups is not too long and in most times range from five to ten minutes depending on the physical setting because students are mature enough to know how to form groups easily and are responsible enough to manage their time. One of the interviewees confirmed that and said: “Students arrange their groups and they often spend five minutes

because they are older enough.” Teachers confirmed also that spending five or ten minutes in rearranging the classroom to become conducive for cooperative learning is acceptable because they often spend around the same time in classroom management when they use whole class instruction.

Question Nine: Do you feel that your students show more willingness to speak in cooperative situations or they produce more in competitive situations where each individual works to achieve better than others?

All the teachers we have interviewed agree that the majority of their students show readiness and motivation to speak when they work in small groups rather than they do in competitive situations. This may be because in competitive situations learners feel more anxious, especially when they listen to fluent students’ performances so that they underestimate their speaking ability as a result they keep silent. Moreover, one of the interviewees declared that cooperative groups can be also competitive groups and students often like competitive groups in which they show more willingness to collaborate to succeed. She said: “Students are more willing to work in groups; in addition, competition can also be in groups; students of one group have to challenge to give as much ideas as they can and see which ones are better to be used.” By creating competition in cooperative classroom structures, students who are interested in competitive learning and struggle when they work in groups come to participate as well as shy or reluctant students become motivated learners because they will enjoy learning more and will have a desire to get their groups to win.

Question Ten: Do you face certain problems when you use cooperative learning technique? If yes, identify some of them.

Almost all of the teachers we interviewed agree that they face a variety of problems when they implement cooperative learning. Among these problems they identified noise, existence of some students who are not accustomed with this technique, and problems of bossy leaders in some groups who often use their own ideas and neglect their teammate’s

ideas. One of our interviewees with whom we attended a variety of sessions in which cooperative learning technique was implemented said that: “ yes, I do; in each group , there is a leader who gives orders, controls the work, imposes his/her own ideas and doesn't let others participate. In other cases, one student does all the work even if he/she doesn't want. Because others don't want to work, he gets the burden”. Such serious problems impede poor learners to benefit from such technique and otherwise support the idea that cooperative learning is effective only for good learners and to handle these problems teachers may move around the groups and motivate silent students to share responsibilities among them or try to vary the classroom structures.

Question Eleven: What do you often do to control your learners' disruptive behaviors when they work in groups?

None of our interviewees disagree that in each group of learners there is often needless behaviors like using the native language, speaking out of subject, and group conflicts. Teachers affirm that such behaviors can be reduced by moving around students to ensure that they are working on the task and use the target language or otherwise, assign them to do so by providing pieces of advice, providing extra explanation to guide them to focus more, ask uninterested learners to share roles with their group mates, or give them some remarks from time to time so that they understand that there is something wrong.

Question Twelve: When you assign your students to work in groups, what are your roles as a teacher in the success of the learning task?

Almost all of the interviewees asserted that they have various roles when their learners work in small groups and these roles vary according to the task given to the groups. The teachers stated that in some situations they act as guides who give directions and explanations, other times as facilitators who provide help, assistance and necessary explanation, other times, act as motivators who encourage students to do more or monitors who move around groups to check how well they are functioning and sometimes they even

act as participants in the task. One of our interviewees explained the different roles she often does when her students work in small groups and said: “I work as guide, helping if there is any problem, a motivator, encouraging them to be more involved in doing their task, and a participant by being a part in a role play for example.”

By being involved in the instruction even if they use learner-centered interaction like cooperative structure, teachers can handle different problematic situations which impede the success of cooperation among learners such as noise and bossy behaviors of the groups’ leaders so that they ensure that each student in all the groups is participating in his/her own learning.

Question Thirteen: Assessing the groups’ work, do you rely on individual assessment or cooperative assessment?

Our interviewees declare that they use both types of assessment. However, one of the interviewees confirmed that she relies more on individual assessment in order to be fair with students through observing how each individual within different groups is participating and progressing, she explained: “I use both in fact. I can check each student work, participation when observing them from near or far, but I rely more on individual assessment and check their progress.” Assessment is effective ways to get learners increase their efforts to achieve. in addition to individual and group assessments, teachers can rely on cooperative assessment in which students assess themselves like peer assessment in which groups’ members assess their teammates.

General Conclusion

The present study aims to explore whether cooperative learning technique is used by EFL teachers at Hassi-Messaoud High School as well as whether the implementation of this technique enhances learners' speaking skill. The results obtained from classroom observation, teachers' interview reveal that teachers are aware of the advantages of using cooperative learning and they often integrate it in teaching speaking skill. The results reveal also that learners' speaking skill has been developed by learning cooperatively in small groups. In other words, the results confirmed the study's hypothesis that if EFL teachers implement cooperative learning to get their learners effectively interact within a cooperative atmosphere, they may develop their own teaching and enhance their learners' speaking skill. Furthermore, the results reveal that although the implementation of cooperative learning technique is proved as effective technique, it still comprises certain negative aspects such as some learners are not interested in working in groups, group conflicts which result in noise and students extensive use of the native language and can be reduced by the collaboration of the teacher and learners.

Suggestions and Recommendations for Teachers

Depending on teachers' claims about some problems they often face when they ask their students to work together in small groups, providing some pedagogical suggestions that could help teachers overcome their cooperative learning implementation difficulties is vital and necessary.

We recommend that teachers can get their learners' interested in learning in small groups by acknowledging the different benefits and objectives of the cooperation lesson at the beginning of any cooperative lesson because stating objectives helps students understand what they are supposed to do and reduces disagreements between group members.

In addition, we suggest that teachers can make cooperation attractive and reduce students' needless behaviors which create challenges for the success of cooperative learning like some students are not interested in working in groups, some students are bossy and others are shy and reluctant by providing tasks that can be finished much more quickly and accurately in groups, selecting tasks that go with a specific interest or ability of the reluctant pupils and making sure that all students like them.

We recommend also that it would be better if teachers vary the ways of grouping students and not leave the choice of teammates always to students in order to develop learners' social skills and get weak learners benefit from average and good students in their teams because when students choose their own teammates they often choose their friends whom they often work with and this lowers their social skills.

We further recommend that teachers can monitor groups' progress by moving around groups because by doing so students understand that the teacher observes their participation and actions and consequently they increase their efforts to use the target language and remain on the topic. Moreover, the teacher can encourage reluctant students to work by using some supporting expressions like "I like your contributions and they can be beneficial for other groups" or "I think that you are collaborating in an intelligent way go on."

Furthermore, We propose that teachers may collaborate to discuss the problems they often face when they implement cooperative learning and try to cooperate to find solutions for these difficulties and benefit from each other's experiences.

Appendixes

Appendix A

Teacher's Interview

The Questions

1. Which degree you have currently held?

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2. For how long have you been teaching English as a foreign language at University level? And for how long you have been teaching oral expression module?

.....

3. What are the learning techniques that you often use in teaching oral expression?

.....

4. Do you use cooperative learning technique? If yes, how often?

.....

5. When you decide to use cooperative learning, does preparation of cooperative lessons take long time?

.....

6. When you apply cooperative learning do you ask your students to work in small groups or in pairs?

.....

7. Do you group your students or you give them the chance to group themselves? And how many students you prefer to be in each group?

.....

8. How much time you often spend in rearranging your classroom to be appropriate for cooperative learning?

.....

9. Do you feel that your students show more willingness to interact and speak in cooperative situations or they produce more in competitive situations where each individual works to achieve better than others?

.....

10. Do you face certain problems when you use cooperative learning technique? If yes, identify some of them.

.....

.....

11. What do you often do to control your learners' disruptive behaviors when they work in groups such as speaking in L1, speaking out of subject and problems of leadership which often cause noise?.....

.....

12. When you assign your learners to work in groups, what are your roles as teacher in the success of the learning task?

.....

13. In assessing the groups' work, do you rely on individual assessment or cooperative assessment?

.....

Appendix B

Observation Checklist for Cooperative Learning

N: Never R: Rarely S: Sometimes O: Often

A: Always

	N	R	S	O	A
<p style="text-align: center;">1. <u>General Observation of Groups' Management</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The physical setting is clean and large enough so that it allows for the success of the cooperative task. 2. Learners are grouped by themselves. 3. Learners are grouped randomly. 4. Time spent in physical management of the classroom is acceptable. 5. Groups consist of no more than six students 					
<p style="text-align: center;">2. <u>General Observation of the Groups</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Learners introduce facts, give opinions, provide suggestions, and give information. 2. Learners show readiness and motivation to work with peers and feel comfortable within the group. 3. Existence of some shy and struggling learners who keep their ideas for themselves and do not cooperate with the other group members. 4. Learners show feelings of responsibility towards other group members' work as well as support silent students to participate in the speaking task at hand. 5. Learners evaluate the usefulness of each others' contributions and do not criticize the opinions of each other. 6. Learners discuss the topic at hand in the target language without speaking in the native language 					

3. General Observation of The Teacher

1. Teacher assigns roles and gives directions for each group member.
2. Teacher interacts with learners and suggests topics for discussion.
3. Teacher motivates students to express their ideas and thoughts by some supporting expressions like “good” and encourages silent students to share their ideas and interact with mates in the group.
4. Teacher monitors individual learners’ unpleasant behaviors and checks if their attention is focused on the cooperative speaking task.
5. Teacher gives instructions and guidelines to monitor and direct the work of the groups.
6. Teacher moves around the groups to see how well the groups are processing.
7. Teacher assesses groups’ work.

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ABSTRACT

The present study aims to investigate the significance of using cooperative learning on improving learners' speaking production and communicative skills in EFL classes. The aim of the present work is to shed some light on the importance of establishing friendly and relaxed atmosphere as an attempt to motivate learners to use English language. It also attempts to make use of small structured groups to improve learner's oral performance and decrease the learner's shy and inhibition. To carry out this research and investigate our hypothesis, we implemented the qualitative approach; classroom observation for second year secondary school students and an interview for EFL Teachers of the Foreign Languages stream at JILALI LIYABES secondary school of Hassi-Messaoud were used as the main data gathering tools to get an insight into how cooperative learning is implemented by EFL teachers during the scholar year 2016-2017. The research findings have shown that learning in small groups developed learner's oral skill and confirmed that the implementation of cooperative learning have some negative points. Finally, this study recommended some suggestions for teachers to guide them for effectively use cooperative learning and to help pupils to improve their speaking skill.

Key words: Speaking skill-Cooperative learning- Motivation- Small structured groups-EFL teachers

Résumé

La présente étude vise à explorer la corrélation entre l'apprenti coopérative et l'amélioration des capacités des apprenants de langue. La recherche étudie la possibilité de promouvoir le parler des apprenants. Ce travail tente de sonder l'efficacité de l'apprenti coopérative afin d'améliorer les performances des apprenants de langue. Par conséquent, nous avons émis l'hypothèse que si les apprenants avaient la possibilité de pratiquer la langue dans des conditions favorables, leurs compétences langagières seraient en amélioration. L'investigation prend comme cas d'étude, les élèves de deuxième année secondaire Anglais au lycée JILALI LIYABES Hassi-Messaoud. Afin d'atteindre les objectifs précédents, nous avons réalisé une étude descriptive. Les outils principaux de la collection des données utilisés dans cette étude étaient l'interview pour les enseignants et l'observation en classe. Pour déterminer la relation entre l'interaction en classe et le développement langagier des élèves, nous avons analysé les résultats obtenus à partir des observations de classe des élèves et ceux des interviews des enseignants. Les résultats des interviews et les observations en classe révèlent une relation positive entre les deux variables et démontrent que l'apprenti coopératif favorise nettement la performance du parler des apprenants.

ملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى استكشاف الآثار المترتبة على العمل التعاوني في تطوير مهارة المحادثة لفائدة تلاميذ السنة الثانية من التعليم الثانوي تخصص لغات أجنبية بثانوية الجبالي الياض بحاسي مسعود . و هو يركز على أهمية أساليب التدريس بتحسين مهارة الكلام مع الاستفادة من العمل الثنائي و العمل في مجموعات من اجل تحقيق أقصى قدر من المشاركة ،نحاول ايضا تسليط بعض الضوء على أهمية إنشاء وسط مريح لتحفيز عملية المشاركة و استمراريتها . الأسلوب المتبع في هذا البحث هو الوصفي الذي يهدف إلى وصف متغيرين: التعلم التعاوني كمتغير مستقل و دوره كاستراتيجية لتحسين مهارة الكلام ، كمتغير تابع ، تم جمع البيانات من خلال وسيلتين: الملاحظة أثناء الحصص و إجراء

مقابلة مع أستاذة اللغة الإنجليزية. اوضحة النتائج أن هذه الإستراتيجية ساهمت في تحسين مستوى التلاميذ في مهارة الكلام
كلمات مفتاحيه: العمل التعاوني-المشاركة-مهارة الكلام- التحفيز