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The Effectiveness of Cooperative Learning in Enhancing EFL Writing Skills:

**The Case of 3rd Year EFL Students in Djeridane Lazhari
Secondary School – Sidi Makhoulf – Laghouat**

**A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of English in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Master in Didactics of English**

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Dedication

In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate; all praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds; and prayers and peace be upon Mohamed his servant and messenger

I dedicate this work to:

The pearl of my life, my miracle and ultimate source of inspiration, my beloved mother, a strong soul who taught me the meaning of sacrifices and love, without her prayers and encouragement

I would not have reached this stage, thank you “mom” for everything.

The pillar of my life, the source of power, my dear father who sacrificed himself for our comfort, who did the best to make me the person who I am today, thank you for your confidence.

To my Grandmother whom I considered as my second mother who stood by my side in the hard days, I am incredibly grateful for everything you did for me.

May God protect and keep them for me.

To my pillars of my life, my beloved brothers, “Mohamed”, “Salah” and “Nouh”, may Allah bless them all.

To all my aunts, uncles, cousins, and everyone in my big family

To the people who have passed away and still in my memory, my aunts “Amel” and “Wafa”

To my best friends “Selma”, “Mouna”, “Hadil”, and “Zahra” with whom I shared the university life with its lights and shadows, I will never forget the greatest moments we shared together.

To every Teacher who was part of my academic journey, this milestone is yours too.

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Abstract

The present research attempts to investigate the effectiveness of cooperative learning in enhancing EFL writing skills of third year secondary school students. The study aims to determine whether CL activities improve EFL students' writing performance in terms of grammar, vocabulary, organization, and coherence, and whether engaging in CL has a positive effect on students' attitudes. The study also aims to highlight the main challenges in implementing CL. In order to reach the aim of this study, descriptive analytical method and quantitative approach were adopted. Besides, two questionnaires have been submitted to a sample composed of 42 third year students in Sidi Makhlouf secondary school (Djeridane Lazhari) and ten (10) teachers from two towns, Sidi Makhlouf and Laghouat. The results of the questionnaires confirmed the hypothesis that CL helps students improve their grammar, gain new vocabulary, and structure their writing with clear organization and smooth coherence. Moreover, CL increases students' confidence, motivation, and engagement in their writing. Additionally, the results also revealed that teachers may find difficulties in implementing CL such as time management, organization of groups, and students' assessment. Accordingly, it is recommended to implement cooperative learning in improving EFL students' writing skills.

Keywords: Writing Skills, Cooperative Learning, EFL

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

CL: Cooperative Learning

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

L1: First Language

S: Statement

ZPD: Zone of Proximal Development

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General Introduction

Background

Teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) involves helping learners communicate effectively in English by developing their four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. It is agreed that the latter is the most complex skill for English foreign language learners to master and very important skill must to acquire. Students are not aware of the importance of writing skills; they are writing just for the sake of satisfying their teachers or for getting marks in exams; giving less attention to write for solving real life problems. Despite its importance, many students neglect this skill, paying little attention to its significance and focusing more on the other skills. The issue of writing also affected teachers, as they found it exhausting to correct papers could barely able to understand a little of their content.

Among the methods that teachers can use to enhance and improve the students' writing skills is cooperative learning method. Cooperative learning has become one of the most effective teaching strategies; enables students work together to accomplish tasks, solve problems, share ideas and create products. The adaptation of cooperative learning can help in facilitating learning process and make acquiring writing skills easier.

1. Statement of the Problem

Developing strong writing skills is essential for EFL students, yet many secondary school students struggle with this complex task. Teachers have become compelled to seek effective methods to enhance both students' writing proficiency and engagement. This study explores how cooperative learning could provide an effective solution to enhance students' writing abilities. The researcher believes that implementing cooperative learning

on EFL students in secondary schools may enhance their writing skills as well as performance.

2. The Aim and the Objectives of the Study

Accordingly, the present study aims at identifying the effects of cooperative learning in enhancing EFL students' writing skills. The first objective of the study is to see whether CL improves EFL students' performance in grammar, vocabulary, organization, and coherence. Furthermore, the study examines the importance of the interaction and teamwork in developing the students' confidence and motivation. Additionally, the researcher tries to address the main challenges that teachers may face during the implementation of CL among EFL students.

3. Research Questions

Based on what is mentioned above, this study puts forward the following main question:

- ✓ To what extent does cooperative learning help improve EFL students' writing skills?

In order to deal with the above research question and attain the research objectives, the following set of questions is raised:

- To what extent do cooperative learning activities improve EFL students' writing performance?
- Does cooperative learning foster a positive attitude towards writing among EFL students?
- What challenges do teachers face in implementing cooperative learning to enhance EFL students' writing skills?

4. Research Hypothesis

In an attempt to answer these questions, three working hypotheses are advanced, which are:

- ✓ Cooperative learning activities significantly improve EFL students' performance in grammar, vocabulary, organization, and coherence.
- ✓ Cooperative learning can encourage interaction and teamwork among students, and can also increase EFL students' confidence and motivation in their writing.
- ✓ Teachers may find difficulties in implementing cooperative learning in EFL writing classes, such as managing groups, assessing individuals, and the nature of activities that may take a long time.

5. Significance of the Study

This dissertation seeks to investigate the effectiveness of cooperative learning in helping EFL students improve their English writing skills. The current study is significant due to the contributions it may add to previous research. Moreover, this study could be helpful for English teachers and researchers who are interested in both language and education fields, especially in improving learners' language skills such as writing skills. Approaches and methods of teaching writing are numerous and diverse; this paper suggests teaching writing skills for EFL students through cooperative learning method.

6. Literature Review

Several researchers have attempted through their investigations address writing issues that many learners -and even teachers- struggle with; by suggesting cooperative learning as an approach to improve writing proficiency.

Writing is a process that focuses more on the practical side rather than just a product, involves four main stages: planning, drafting, editing, and the final version. It is needed and useful in both education and daily life. Writing skill improves critical thinking, creativity, self-expression, and motivation. However, it can be difficult for those learners who have limited knowledge about the language, demotivated to write, and lack in organizing ideas. To improve writing ability multiple effective strategies and approaches are recommended, including the writing process, collaborative approach, and peer-feedback (Harmer, 2004).

McCafferty et al. (2006) explained the concept of cooperative learning as an instructional approach grounded in the students' interaction and working in groups to achieve a successful learning process. The approach contains five fundamental elements: positive interdependence, individual accountability, face-to-face interaction, social skills development, and group processing. The book highlighted the root of cooperative learning in several educational and psychological theories. Vygotsky's theory of learning supports the collaborative learning approach. Vygotsky claims that learning process can be enhanced through social interaction (Sociocultural/ Social Constructivism Theory), which means both social interaction and culture are essential to cognitive development. The idea is that learners can with the help of more knowledgeable individuals and supportive environments. Zone of proximal development (ZPD) and scaffolding are two vital keys in the learning theory. In Piaget's constructivist theory, individuals construct knowledge through exploration and interaction, the theory focuses more on the cognitive development.

It has been thought that cooperative learning is the key of learning writing skills, combining the two would produce satisfactory results for learners' writing skills.

According to Sijali (2017), a PhD scholar in ELT and a life member of the NELTA journal, in his study measured the applicability of cooperative learning in enhancing the four language skills of secondary school students in Nepal. The results of the study showed that cooperative learning benefited the students a great deal in terms of their skills compared with the traditional methods. All the skills, speaking, listening, reading, and writing were improved through the implementation of cooperative learning. This interprets the great effectiveness of cooperative learning in improving learners' proficiency levels in the English language.

Based on what scholars discussed above, it is understood that writing is a difficult skill to acquire and learners can master it effectively through an interactive environment. Despite the research and the experiments conducted on the topic, the topic needs further investigation. This study takes a different direction in addressing the topic; it concentrates on EFL secondary school teachers' and students' perspectives on the implementation of cooperative learning in enhancing students' writing skills. Furthermore, the present work adopts different instruments with different context.

7. Research Methodology

In order to reach the aim of the present study, descriptive analytical method will be adopted. This method will help the researcher to describe and analyze the outcomes of the findings from the participants and delve deeper into the topic. The data will be collected mainly from two questionnaires conducted for EFL students and teachers at secondary school. The first questionnaire will be designed to explore students' views about working in groups to improve their writing skills. The second questionnaire will be administered to investigate teachers' perspectives on the effects of implementing cooperative learning activities on EFL secondary school students. The gathered data will be analyzed and

interpreted using quantitative approach. Students who are targeted in this study are 42 third year students in Djeridane Lazhari secondary school (Sidi Makhlouf). For teachers, they are 10 teachers mixed between secondary schools of Sidi Makhlouf and Laghouat. The researcher decided to expand the sample throughout visiting other schools in Laghouat due to the limited number of teachers in the institutions.

8. Research Structure

This dissertation will be organized into two parts with two chapters, each assigned to particular purpose. The first part contains a general introduction, highlights the aim of the research, the research questions, the hypothesis, the significant of the research, and points out the research methodology. The first chapter is theoretical chapter, includes previous studies on writing skills and cooperative learning and discusses the relationship between them. The second chapter is a practical chapter, examines the effectiveness of cooperative learning in enhancing EFL writing skills. This chapter introduces the research design, the research methods, research approaches, population and sampling, and data collection instruments and procedures, and discussion of the results. This chapter will also contain tables and charts to explain the main findings of the questionnaires. The last part is a general conclusion, where the whole dissertation is summarized, as well as, the limitations of the study and recommendations for future research are provided.

Chapter One:

Writing Skills and Cooperative Learning in EFL

Introduction

The ability to communicate effectively in English language requires success in mastering both productive skills and receptive skills. Speaking and writing are productive skills, while listening and reading are receptive skills (Hidayati, 2018). Since all English language skills are essential in learning the language, researchers and scholars have associated the development of these skills, writing skills in particular, with using cooperative learning. This chapter is a review of previous studies done by researchers interested in the topic. The purpose of this chapter is searching for previous studies tackled writing skills, cooperative learning, and the role of cooperative learning in improving writing skills of EFL learners.

The chapter is divided into three main sections: 1) writing skills; 2) cooperative learning; 3) the relationship between writing skills and cooperative learning. The first section concentrates on the definition, importance, and components of writing. Briefly highlights the main approaches of teaching writing and the main challenges in learning the skill. In the second part of the chapter, the focus is on the theoretical framework of cooperative learning, including its characteristics, benefits, and the main theories support CL. The chapter also discusses the challenges of cooperative learning. Finally, the last section discusses how CL enhances the writing skills of EFL students, relying on previous studies.

1.1 Writing Skills

1.1.1 Definition of Writing

Writing has been defined by many scholars in various ways. Lyons and Heasley (2006, as cited in Harlena et al., 2019) state that, “Writing is a clearly complex process” (p. 13).

Similarly, Harlena et al. (2019) define writing as “a complex process that allows students to explore thoughts and ideas and make them visible and concrete.” (p. 276). In other words, writing is indeed difficult skill requires careful attention, enabling students to transform their thoughts, ideas, and feelings into written words. In addition, the act of writing is expressing someone’s thoughts; by translating them into written language (Monaghan, 2007). Good thinking during writing encourages critical thinking, allows analyzing and organizing ideas in a creative way. So, it is clear that everyone agrees that a good production of writing begins from a good way of thinking.

Furthermore, writing is producing coherent and interconnected linguistic sentences without any grammatical mistakes; it is not just throwing random words that might lead to misunderstanding of the meaning. In order to convey the message correctly, the writer should set a goal in mind before he starts writing. This process makes the audience understanding the aim of the production easily during reading (Silva, 1990:11, as cited in Baghzou, 2021). Moreover, Baghzou (2021) argues with the interactive approach, which suggested that writing is an interactive process. She explains this by viewing writing as a text-written conversation between the writer and the reader. This kind of communication makes the writer aware of the recipients and makes his content valuable.

In addition, writing skill is a process that allows humans to communicate effectively their thoughts through using written symbols and alphabets (Najim, 2020). Likewise, Brown (2001) states that the compositional nature of writing has produced writing pedagogy that focuses students on how to generate ideas, how to organize them cohesively into a written text, also texts are edited for appropriate grammar, and how the final product is made.

In addition to what have been mentioned above, researchers have defined writing skill differently than previously mentioned definitions, like Laplante (2018) who has defined writing as a process that requires the writer pass through four main stages: inventing, drafting, revising, and editing, in order to produce concise texts. Moreover, Mustofa & Syfi (2020) explain writing as ongoing process rather than just a final product. Simply, writing is a process that encourages student-centered learning, emphasizes on four main stages of writing: planning, drafting, revising, and editing (Indriyani, 2024).

All in all, the definitions above are deduced that writing is the ability to communicate with others through transforming thoughts, feelings, and ideas into words in order to formulate pieces of writing. This process helps the writer become a good communicator. For this reason, all researchers are agreeing that writing is the most important skill among other English language skills.

1.1.2 The Importance of Writing

Writing helps students to become successful in communicating with their teachers, peers, and in the workplace. Through writing, an individual can write memoirs, interviews, reports, and e-mails without any difficulties. It is not essential only in educational field, but also in daily life (Walsh, 2010). Furthermore, Cherif (2021) mentions that, “Writing skill is probably the most needed in academic and professional communities. It constitutes an important means of communication through which the writer expresses feeling, ideas and arguments.” (p.1). In addition, Afrin ((2016, as cited in Hidayati, 2018) states that in all levels writing is the adopted skill in evaluating students’ performance. So, for them writing skill is a communication means; paves a way for people to succeed in their daily, academic, and professional life.

Being able to compose and write is an indication of academic success and an increase of the ability to cope with civic life and the global economy, which opens up many opportunities. Writing is a fundamental and powerful tool for both children and adults, because while writing; the person expresses what is in his mind as this makes him learning new things that he did not realize before (Graham & Perin, 2007).

1.1.3 Components of Writing

Various authors believe that mastering writing aspects leads to good mastery of writing. At this point, the authors and researchers are differing in categorizing writing skills; each of them has his own division based on his understanding and experience. According to Roza (2011, as cited in Rachman et al., 2024), there are five essential aspects in writing: Grammar, Vocabulary, Mechanics, Form, and content.

1.1.3.1 Grammar

Grammar refers to be knowledgeable about the rules of the language and syntactic patterns, it means formulating grammatically correct sentences. So, if the writer has limited knowledge about the grammar, the audience will not be able to grasp the correct meaning (Roza, 2011, as cited in Rachman et al., 2024).

1.1.3.2 Vocabulary

That is an important skill in learning writing, means selecting the appropriate words on the right topic. The primary objective that the writer should take into consideration is clarifying his/her ideas (Ibid).

1.1.3.3 Mechanic

Mechanic refers to the correct use of language conventions and structure correct sentences. It includes being able to use punctuation correctly, capitalize the words that need that; like proper nouns and the first word of a sentence (Roza, 2011, as cited in Rachman et al., 2024).

1.1.3.4 Form (Organization)

Form means organizing ideas and structuring the content that intended to be written. Well organization represents well communication between the writer and the reader (Ibid).

1.1.3.5 Content

Content is how the writer develops his/her idea related to the topic (Ibid).

1.1.4 Approaches of Teaching Writing

Before the 1960s, with the domination of behavioristic psychology and structural linguistics at that time, many approaches are appeared. After which, the movement of cognitive psychology and functional linguistics emerged. The movement showed a significant change in the language; whose reflections can be clearly observed in all basics of the language (Brown, 1994). According to Mzinganjira et al. (2024), there are three principal writing approaches: the product approach, the genre approach, and the process approach.

1.1.4.1 Product Approach

The product approach concentrates on the finished product (Gautam, 2019). In this approach the students use “a model- text”, means the teacher gives the students a text

contains examples about the language rules; they do the task by imitating the model text. Sometimes, the teacher asks students to re-write the text by changing the tense of the text (Hedge, 2000). This approach of writing lays special emphasis on the structure, grammatical accuracy, and producing an error-free coherent text (Baghzou, 2021). However, the approach has been criticized by Hedge (2000) who considers it boring, demotivating, ignores creativity, and discourages critical thinking.

1.1.4.2 Genre Approach

Genre Approach is one of the most popular approaches that have developed by Martin (1993) in Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL) model of language; it is linking the language patterns with the social contexts. This approach focuses on enabling learners explore how language functions in the social context, by teaching them the explicit and systematic explanations of the ways language functions in social context. Regarding the teachers' role, they are taking the responsibility of encouraging and making students engaged with different types of genres; this will make them acquire communication skill easily in various contexts with different goals and audiences (Ngubane, 2020).

1.1.4.3 Process Approach

“The process writing approach is based on the assumption that writing is an ongoing process, developing in stages.” (Mzinganjira et al., 2024, p. 565); they go to suggest that writing is a process that entails passing through stages to produce well-organized piece of writing; starts with writing the first draft and ends with the final product. Harmer (2004) suggests four basic stages of the writing process: Planning, Drafting, Editing, and the Final version.

1.1.4.3.1 Planning

Planning is thinking about ideas that writers will include in their writing. It can be either by taking detailed notes or just few jotted words. In planning, writers should take into consideration three main issues: the purpose of their writing, the audience addressed to the content, and the content structure which is the ideas chosen by the writers (Harmer, 2004).

1.1.4.3.2 Drafting

It is the first attempt produced by the writers; it can be more than one draft. In this step, writers editing his paper many times until they get the final version (Ibid).

1.1.4.3.3 Editing (Reflecting and Revising)

After writing the draft, writers are going to re-read it and see if anything is missing. Through this process, they may find ambiguous words, a defect in the organization of thoughts, or grammatical mistakes (Ibid).

1.1.4.3.4 The Final Version

This is the last stage, where writers produce the last paper; after the final editing. Here, they are ready to give the last version to the audience (Ibid).

1.1.5 Learners' Writing Challenges

Writing is considered as one of the most difficult skills. In order to acquire the writing skills; the writer needs to know the basics of writing, such as knowing concepts, capitalization, vocabulary, punctuation, and being able to form correct sentences in different genres (Jusun & Yunus, 2018, as cited in Bhandari, 2024). In general, all language

users, whether they are learning a new language or in their mother tongue, all find complexity in writing skills (Kroll, 1990, as cited in Demneri, 2024).

Usually, when students are asked to express and write their thoughts or experiences, they find it difficult to do so; this is because of a lack of practice (Alisha et al., 2019). According to Afrin (2016, as cited in Hidayati, 2018), the most difficulties that non-English major students face lies in incorrect usage of grammar, lack of motivation and training. Similarly, Fareed et al. (2016, as cited in Bhandari, 2024) reveals that students are always having problems in language competences like grammar, syntax and vocabulary. Also, they rely heavily on L1 to translate their thoughts, having limited ideas, and weaknesses in structural organization. Moreover, lack of ideas, vocabulary and writing structure become the students' problem in producing a good piece of writing (Paskal et al., 2015, as cited in Nawas, 2018). In other hands, writing is difficult because when writing, the writer must have creative inspiration, he must be creative, able to solve and analyze problems, and always reflecting and revising his product. Not being able to do all of this makes the writer unable to write well (Demeneri, 2024).

According to Patty (2024), there are three factors that make writers face obstacles in writing process. The first factor is cognitive problems; involve low working memory capacity, poor vocabulary knowledge, low general cognitive ability, and poor reading ability. Secondly, linguistic difficulties include lexical sophistication and diversity; means using advanced vocabulary, syntactic complexity; refers to using different types of sentences, grammar and mechanics issues, and cohesion and coherence problems. The last factor is affective challenges, when students feel anxious and fear while writing, also the loss of passion, and low self-efficacy which may cause loss of confidence in writing.

In one word, writing is not an easy skill to master; every English language learner faces obstacles in learning it. Sometimes, an individual feels good at expressing his ideas, but lacks vocabulary. Sometimes, a student has difficulty in organizing thoughts and issues in grammar accuracy. In addition, anxiety and lack of motivation are also two features that many of students struggle with.

1.2 Cooperative Learning

1.2.1 Definition of Cooperative Learning

The term of cooperative learning is defined by different researchers in variety of ways. According to Johnson et al., (1991, as cited in Bousbai & Hamdini, 2019), cooperative learning is an instructional strategy that appears when students are working together, as it contains dividing students into groups in order to achieve a specific purpose; in which students are in charge of their own learning and the members of the group they belong to. Additionally, Madinabeitia (2002, as cited in Chebri, 2017) defines collaborative learning as a fundamental method in education, aims to improve interaction between students and increase their intrapersonal intelligence, by working the students with each other. Also, all learners in cooperative learning are benefiting from each other; by sharing their ideas and knowledge with group members to achieve a common goal (Khan, 2015, as cited in Houari, 2023). Moreover, working with a team to accomplish a task that the learners have been asked to do, under certain conditions, represents cooperative learning. All members are obliged to participate with the team to finish the assignment that the instructor asked to do (Felder & Brent, 2007). Besides, the groups in this strategy are based on the principle that learners relying on themselves, by working independently without direct supervision from the instructors (Saihi, 2022).

All provided definitions emphasize on learner-centered. The idea is that working collaboratively helps students exchange their knowledge and experiences with their peers. This method increases students' abilities in different activities and provides satisfactory results for their learning process.

1.2.2 Characteristics of Cooperative Learning

1.2.2.1 Positive Interdependence

It is considered to be both the basis and the heart of CL. It emphasizes on the principle that all group members are linked, if one student fails; the whole group fails. The success of the groups is established when all members succeed (Johnson & Johnson, 1999).

1.2.2.2 Individual Accountability

It is also considered as an important element, means, every single member should be responsible for learning the group members and each one needs to reach a certain level in mastery (Ibid).

1.2.2.3 Face-to-Face Promotive Interaction

Students helping each other through exchanging feedback, solve problems, and encourage one another (Ibid).

1.2.2.4 Interpersonal and Small Group Skills

Empowering students to develop skills such as: leadership, trust- building, decision-making, communication, and conflict management skills (Ibid).

1.2.2.5 Group Processing

It is like a reflection on what have been done collaboratively, where students discuss whether they benefited from the group's actions or not, discuss the behaviors that must be change next time, and the difficulties they faced with the group (Johnson & Johnson, 1999).

1.2.3 Benefits of Cooperative Learning

Through the research conducted on cooperative learning, which has yielded satisfactory results for many scholars. Johnson & Johnson 1975 in Johnson & Johnson, 1984, highlighted the importance of CL, as they believe that CL strengthens students' memory, getting good marks, develops their critical thinking and being able to solve problems easily, builds positive energy in the classroom, and improves their social skills. In addition, Komiljonovna (2024) argues that practicing collaboration helps students address problems, find solutions, and learn new ideas from others. It also promotes deeper understanding through peer interaction and develops social and communication skills through engaging in discussions with others. Working collaboratively encourages active learning, which has proved to be effective by keeping learners motivated and engaged and keeping learning process flexible.

1.2.4 Theories Support Cooperative Learning

There have been many scholars introduced a multiple theories related to cooperative learning, their theories were as a support to this approach. This study focuses on two basic theories, Piaget's and Vygotsky theories; that have been introduced in McCafferty, Jacobs,

& Iddings's book. These theories emphasize on the significant of social interaction and cognitive development.

Piaget argues that learners actively construct their own understanding of the world through balancing between current schemas and new experiences with the world (equilibration). Piaget's constructivism theory supports helping students embody real life tasks and play active roles to improve their interaction in the classroom. As an example, Murray (1986) noticed that students were not able to work alone, unless they were doing tasks together. Piaget views the development as a precoded aspect of our biology and any help from another party does not help in development (McCafferty et al., 2006).

On the other hand, Vygotsky's theory explained that learning occurs effectively when learners construct knowledge through discovery and experimental environments. He believes that learning takes place through social interaction (sociocultural theory); means that learners learn effectively through engaging with more knowledgeable individuals and supportive environments. Vygotsky viewed that the use of symbols and signs help shape the way individuals understand and interact with the world. One of Vygotsky's key contributions to learning is the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)¹; this concept explains the importance of interaction for learning, it enables learners progress beyond their limitations through guided participations. Besides that, Wood, Bruner, & Ross (1976) introduced scaffolding notion, in which a more knowledgeable individual provides structured support to help a learner develop new skills. This support is gradually withdrawn as the learner becomes competent (McCafferty et al., 2006).

¹ It distinguishes between what a child can do on her or his own cognitively and what she or he can do in conjunction with an adult or more capable peer (Vygotsky 1978).

Both theories, Vygotsky and Piaget, complement each other. The first encourages social interaction in learning, whereas the latter emphasizes on active learning of the learners. Both are fundamental theories that contributed to the development of modern teaching methods.

1.4.5 Issues in the Implementation of Cooperative Learning

Although the popularity of cooperative learning in the educational field and the emphasis of many scholars and researchers on adopting it as a method to improve students' level, others have indicated that its implementation also creates difficulties for both, teachers and students. Hamsah et al. (2024) stated that the teacher encounters various challenges in implementing collaborative learning method, such as time constraints, low language proficiency, and difficulties in managing group dynamics. Similarly, Buchs et al. 2017 pointed out that the curriculum restricts the application of cooperative learning in the classes and finding the time needed for its implementation and evaluating student work during cooperative learning. Putting students in groups may lead to sharing incorrect information among them (Renandya & Jacobs, 2017).

Furthermore, lack of teachers' experience with cooperative learning is considered also as a problem in practicing cooperative learning, this could lead to incorrect implementation of the method. Also, Lack of harmony among group members may negatively affect students' level, another problem is relying on high achiever students may cause the failure of other students in their academic status (Wondimu & Kassaw, 2019). In addition to the disadvantages of cooperative learning, teachers noticed that students refuse to participate in doing the activities, they keep gossip about things are not related to the activity and they always trying to deviate from the exercise (Celik et al., 2013).

Putting students in groups requires at least be close in level, as it does not work well with lower grade students because the responsibility will be only on the high students, they will exhausting other members and hindering the whole groups to explore more knowledge about English. Moreover, CL increases the burden on the teacher; he needs more preparation and time for its success and his intervention in groups is always required for explanation, guidance, and even conflicts between group members (Zhu et al., 2006).

All in all, cooperative learning is like any other methods; it has advantages and disadvantages. The above studies emphasized on that implementing CL may lead to difficulties such as assessing students, managing groups, and time-consuming. Also, cooperative learning could not work well if students lack responsibility or they are not skillful enough in the language.

1.3 The Relationship between Cooperative Learning and Writing Skills

Writing is believed to be the hardest skill for EFL learners to master; that is why teachers began to think about their approaches to teaching writing” (Gasmi, 2013, p. 105), cooperative learning is one of the effective approaches that have been integrated by many teachers in teaching different matters including writing skills. This method has been considered as a key for success in mastering writing skills. As CL focuses on group work, multiple researchers began testing this method with different students in different levels, elementary, university, and so on. Through their investigation, each one has reached certain outcomes. Linking CL with writing skills produced satisfactory results for the majority, as evidenced by many studies.

1.3.1 Integration of Cooperative Learning in Teaching EFL Writing Skills

In a study conducted by Hertiki & Juliati (2019), the authors tried to find out whether using CL helps EFL students improve their writing skills or not. The data were gathered from documentation, observation and test. The findings illustrated that students' writing skills has improved through the use of Cooperative Learning and increased their motivation in the classroom. The authors addressed the difficulties faced by students by suggesting using various CL techniques.

Yusuf et al. (2019) examined the effects of using CL in improving writing skills among the ninth grade students in a middle school in Kuala Lumpur. They used quasi-experimental with 30 students to prove their hypothesis. The study focused on measuring students' five writing skills, including vocabulary, organization, grammar and mechanics. The results showed that students' writing performance in the post-test was good compared with the pre-test as well as their five skills were enhanced. The authors recommended using this method because it has a positive impact on students' performance.

Additionally, Shammout (2020) in her research investigated the role of CL strategies in enhancing EFL learners writing skills at Arab International University. Two instruments were used to achieve the aim of the research; questionnaire and the pre- test and post- test. Moreover, the study focused on implementing tow cooperative learning strategies, STAD and Jigsaw. The finding indicated that the application of CL has increased students' level in writing and left a good impression on their behavior. Furthermore, Hassaballa & Ezza (2022) tackled the effect of cooperative learning in promoting reading and writing skills in second year Sudanese EFL students at University of Khartoum. The study aimed to compare between students who were taught using CL and students who were taught using

traditional methods. The results revealed that those who integrated in cooperative learning showed positive attitudes towards their reading and writing skills.

Cooperative learning has changed the role of students in learning process from passive to active (Trung & Truong, 2023). This change created a positive environment for students and gave them the opportunity to express their ideas with their peers and write them freely. Aminloo (2013) stated that group work is more effective in writing than working individually; it makes students engaged in discussions with their group mates and exchange feedback. Cooperative learning positively impacts all aspects of writing, including content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics (Ahangari & Samadian, 2014). Adopting CL in improving grammar of the learners in the EFL classrooms also showed satisfactory results (Houari, 2023).

Other research findings in this area showed improvements in students' social skills. Shammout (2023) believed that CL is beneficial in different context; it helps students participate without fears and explore new information. It also assists weak students to share their ideas comfortably. She noticed a change in students' writing level when they engaged with strong students. Engaging students in CL activities enables them acquire knowledge, support each other, complete assignment quickly, and boost social skills (Alhebaishi, 2019). CL has a great influence on the enhancement of both thinking skills motivation social and collaborative skills (Debache, 2016).

Khan et al. (2015) evaluated the effectiveness of cooperative learning method versus traditional methods on students' writing abilities. The nature of the study was experimental, where the authors compared between experimental and control groups. The results indicated that those students who were engaged in cooperative learning showed greater performance in their writing skills than those who were engaged in traditional

methods. The overall conclusion was therefore that CL is more effective than traditional methods and students were active and showed interaction during learning process.

In another study, Yaqoob & Rachid (2023) made a comparison between traditional methods with cooperative and activity oriented learning in teaching English at secondary school level. To achieve the goal of the study, they divided the participants into two experimental groups exposed to cooperative learning and activity-based teaching and one control group received traditional instructions. The experiment recorded success of the groups who received cooperative learning. This study proved that employment of cooperative learning in the context of English language is more beneficial than traditional methods.

Conclusion

This chapter has three separated sections. The first one tackled writing skills, the second section presented cooperative learning and the third section combined the two variables. The chapter dealt with different views of many scholars, most of them shared the idea that cooperative learning is essential in improving EFL students' writing skills; it fosters critical thinking, encourages positive interdependence, and boosts motivation and self-esteem. Its adaptation in writing positively affects students' level. In the following chapter, the methodology used in the study will be discussed in detail.

Chapter Two:

Methodology, Data Collection and Analysis

Introduction

This research aims to study the effect of using cooperative learning in enhancing writing skills of EFL secondary school students. In addition, the study attempts to answer the three main research questions in Chapter one (see page 3) and tries to approve the hypothesis (see page 4) that have been proposed in order to solve the research problem. This chapter is a practical part of this research, aims to discuss the methodology used in this study and shows how the data is collected; two questionnaires are used as an instrument to collect data. This chapter covers research design, research methods, research approaches, population and sampling, data collection instruments and procedures, and data analysis. This chapter will also contain tables and charts to explain the main findings of the questionnaires.

2.1 Research Design

In order to achieve the aim of the study, a descriptive analytical method was employed. The researcher did not find a more appropriated method to describe and analyze the findings of the questionnaires than this method. It fits the nature of the study and helps to draw appropriate conclusion.

This study followed a quantitative approach to prove that working collaboratively could enhance widely writing skills of 3rd year secondary school students. It is a suitable method to describe and analyze perceptions of students and teachers from the questionnaires. It helps to converting the collected data from the questionnaires into numbers and percentages.

2.2 Population and Sampling

Within this research, two samples were introduced; students and teachers. Before starting the field work, the population of students was supposed to be 53 students studying in 3rd year secondary school. However, 11 students were absent; so the researcher excluded them from the analysis. The participants of the study have become 42 third year EFL students from Djeridane Lazhary secondary school in Sidi Makhlouf, Laghouat, Algeria 2024/ 2025. The population was mainly selected because they are in the final phase of secondary school, which means they have acquired the language well and their writing skills are acceptable compared to the other levels. Moreover, they have experienced different methods in learning the language and they expected to give full and valuable answers based on their experiences.

Teachers who are targeted in this study are 10 EFL secondary school teachers. This includes teachers from two towns, Sidi Makhlouf and Laghouat. The expansion was due to the small number of teachers in secondary schools. Since the teachers are in charge of their students' learning, their perceptions are crucial in this study because they are aware of their students' level and needs in the language and able to know if cooperative learning method is useful for their writing.

2.3 Data Collection Instruments and Procedures

2.3.1 Research Instruments

In the present study, the researcher designed two paper-based questionnaires; one was for students and the other for teachers. A questionnaire was chosen as a tool to measure students' level in writing skills and gets their opinions regarding cooperative learning.

Furthermore, it helped to measure teachers' attitudes towards the use of cooperative learning in improving EFL students writing skills as well as it helped in gathering data in a short period of time.

2.3.2 Procedures

To achieve the objectives of the study, two questionnaires were submitted. The first questionnaire was for third year EFL students from Djeridane Lazhary secondary school in Sidi Makhlouf and the second was for teachers from two towns, Sidi Makhlouf and Laghouat. The participants of the study received a questionnaire in April 2025 at their schools. The questionnaires were analyzed using Microsoft Excel 2010.

2.4 Data Analysis

This part includes the analysis and interpretation of students' and teachers' questionnaires. The data were analyzed using quantitative approach. The collected data were converted to graphs through using Microsoft Excel 2010. After all, the researcher analyzed the findings and reached the required objectives.

2.4.1 Students' Questionnaire

2.4.1.1 Description of Students' Questionnaire

The first questionnaire was submitted to students, is made of three main sections with 16 distinct questions. The first section includes 3 questions aims to have students' background information. It seeks to explore students' level in English. The second section consists of 6 different questions, focuses on writing skills of students. This part emphasizes on measuring students' writing level in English, the main difficulties, writing tasks, and so

on. The third section involves Likert-scale statements; it seeks to measure students' attitudes towards cooperative learning. The last question is open-ended question, students were asked to mention the main challenges they usually face when writing. The questionnaire was distributed and explained to 42 students, with the help of the teachers of Djeridane Lazhari secondary school. The questions were a combination of open-ended, yes/no questions, multiple-choice questions, and Likert-scale.

2.4.1.2 Analysis and Interpretation of Students' Questionnaire

Section 1: *Background Information*

Q1. Do you enjoy learning English?

Suggestions	Yes	No
Number	34	8
Percentage %	81%	19%

Table 2.1: *English Preference Percentage*

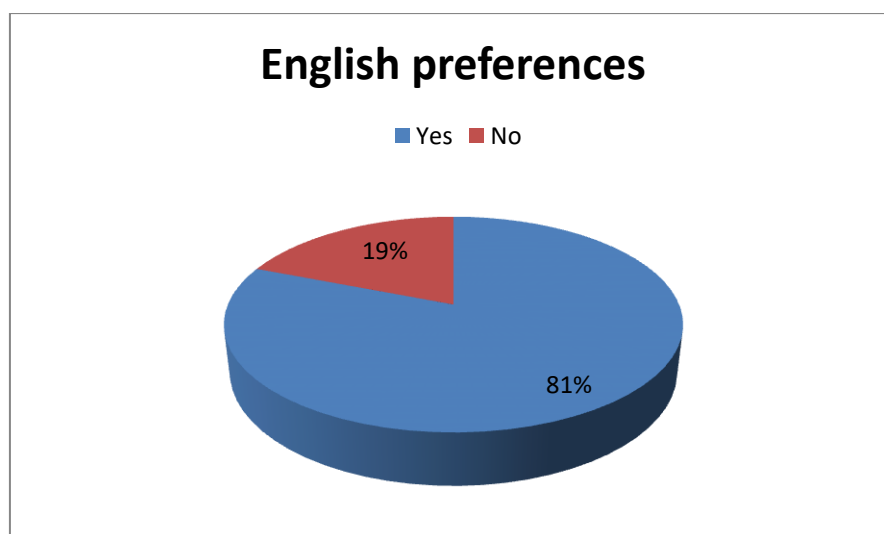


Figure 2.1: *English Preferences*

This question was asked to find out whether students like to learn English or not. According to the table 2.1 and figure 2.1, we found in the participants' answers that 34 of them who represent 81% like to learn English, while only 8 (19%) dislike it. This indicates that most of students prefer and enjoy learning English.

Q2. What is your average mark in English?

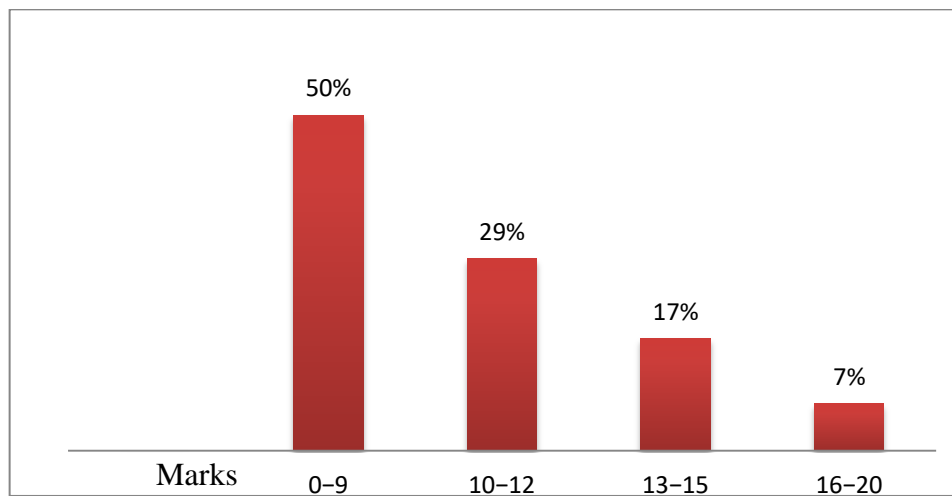


Figure 2.2: Students' Marks in English

According to the charts (figure 2.2), 22 of students who represent half of the participants (50%) answered that their marks in English are weak, while 12 (29%) said that their marks are average, 7 students (17%) are good, and 3 (7%) of students stated that their marks are always excellent. This point out that half of students their marks are good and the rest their marks are low.

Q3. How do you rate your level in English language?

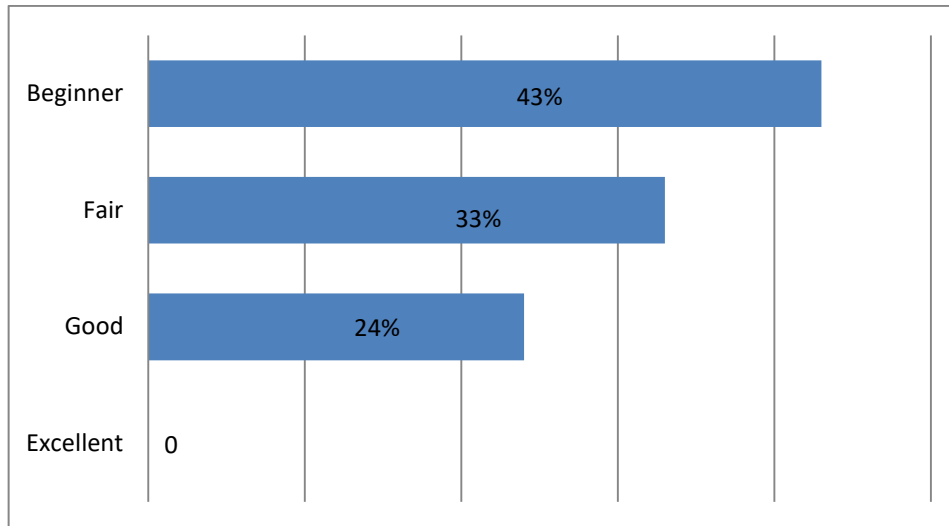


Figure 2.3: Students' Level in English Language

Based on figure 2.3, 43% of students considered themselves as beginners in English language and 33% students find their level average. However, 24% of students revealed that their level is good and no one is excellent in English. The results illustrate that the majority of students their level in English is acceptable.

Section 2: Writing Skills and Experience

Q4. How do you evaluate your writing skills in English?

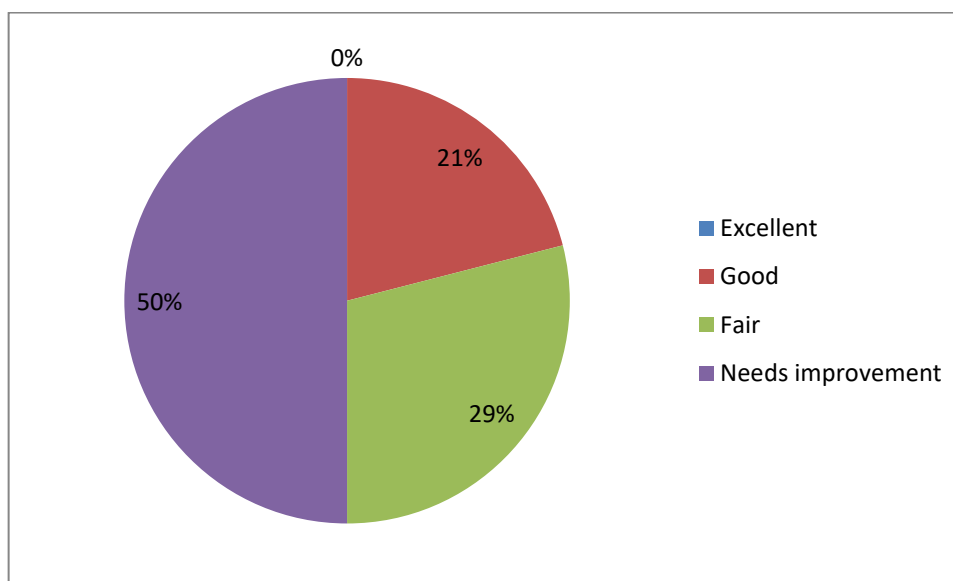


Figure 2.4: Students' Evaluation of their Level in Writing Skills

From figure 2.4, we can see that 50% of participants (20 students) evaluated their level in writing as not good and needs improvement, 29% of them (12 students) described their level as fair. 9 (21%) of students find themselves good at writing and no one is excellent in writing in English. The shown data reveal that the largest number of students their writing skill is acceptable.

S5. Writing in English is difficult for me:

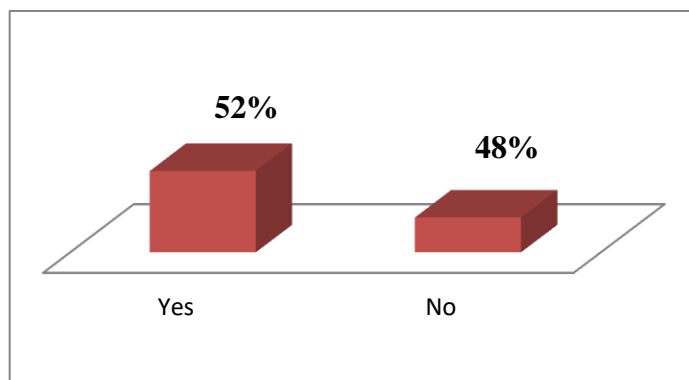


Figure 2.5: Writing Difficulty

As it can be seen from figure 2.5, a high percentage of students (52%) proclaimed that writing in English is hard for them, while the remaining students (48%) affirmed that writing in English is easy. This illustrates that writing skill is complex and not easy to master.

Q6. What aspects of writing are most challenging for you? (Choose all that apply)

Writing aspects	Vocabulary	Grammar	Spelling	Organization & Coherence
Percentage	25%	34%	20%	21%

Table 2.2: The Hardest Aspect in Writing Percentage

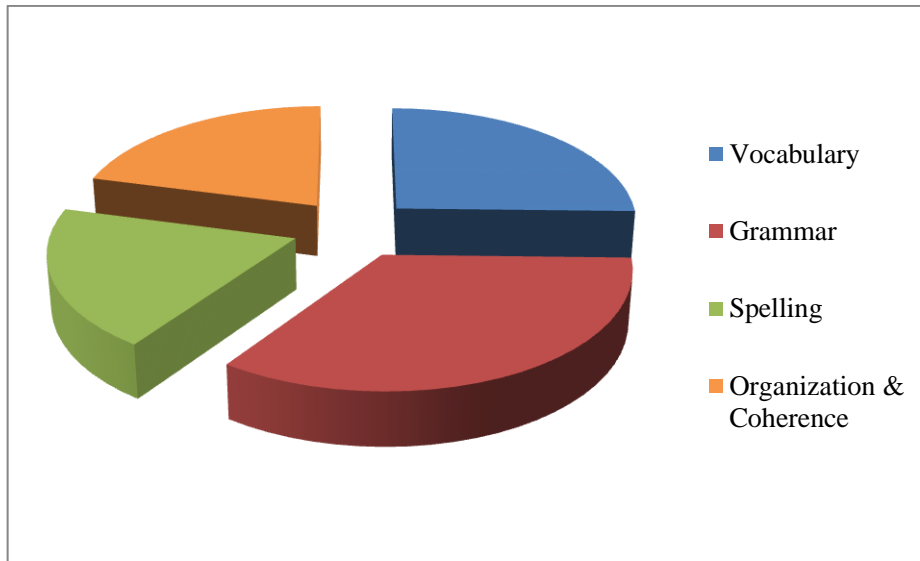


Figure 2.6: *The Hardest Aspect in Writing*

As table 2.2 and figure 2.6 shows, the responses of this question are varied. The majority of students (34%) reported that when they start writing they find difficulties in grammar, 25% of them have issues in vocabulary. Whereas, 20% of students have difficulties in spelling and 21% have difficulties in organization & coherence. Since the results are close, this indicates that students face difficulties in all aspects of writing, especially in grammar.

Q7. What types of writing tasks do you do most often in the class? (Choose all that apply)

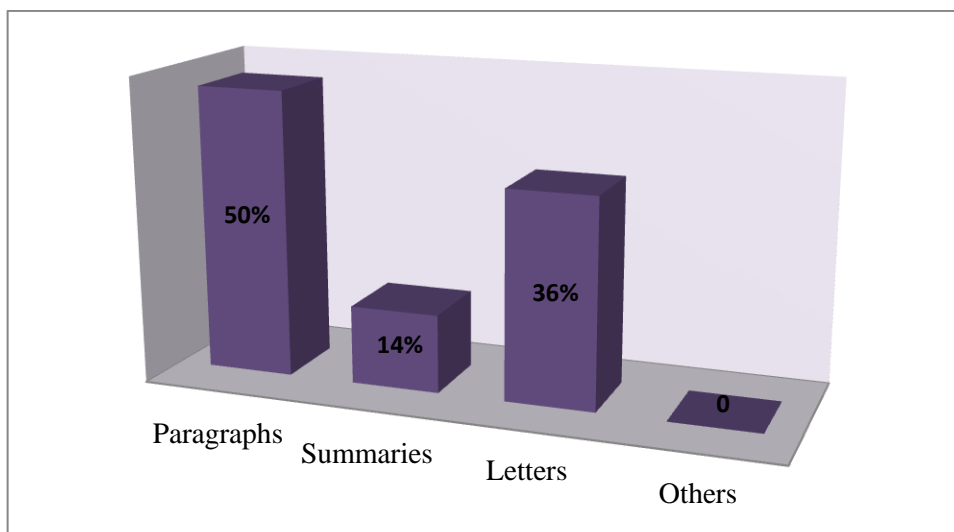


Figure 2.7: *Types of Writing Tasks*

In figure 2.7, students were asked about types of writing tasks they usually do in the English classes and they were asked to list others if applicable. 50% of students claimed that they always write paragraphs in writing tasks, 36% of them chose letters, 14% revealed that they write summaries, and no one mentioned any other writing tasks. This shows that students are engaged more in writing paragraphs.

Q8. Which writing format do you prefer? Why?

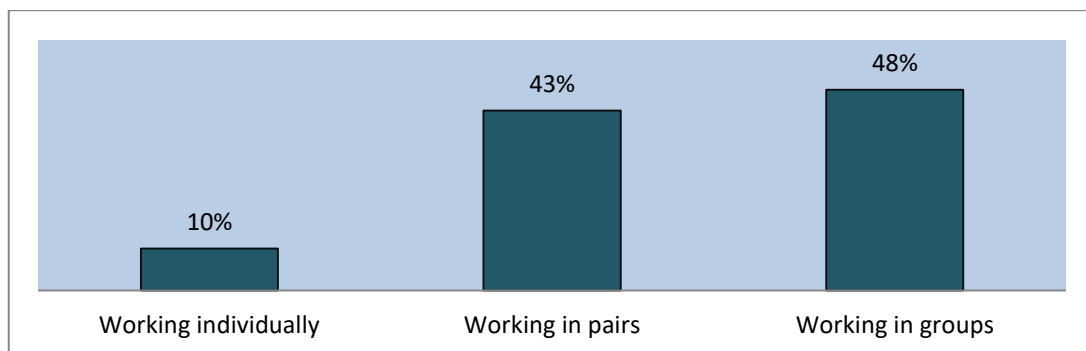


Figure 2.8: Students' Preferable Way in Writing

In this question, students were asked about their preferred way in writing and were asked to justify their choices. About 20 (48%) of students preferred working in groups because helps them to learn from each other through, exchange their knowledge, correct to themselves, and motivate them to write freely. Whereas, 18 (43%) of them prefer working in pairs because they feel more comfortable sharing their ideas with classmate and understand each other. The minority of students who are 4 (10%) like to work individually because they do not agree with the others and they feel free to write whatever they want. This explains that the majority of students tends to write whether in pairs or in groups.

Q9. Have you ever worked on writing tasks in a group during English classes?

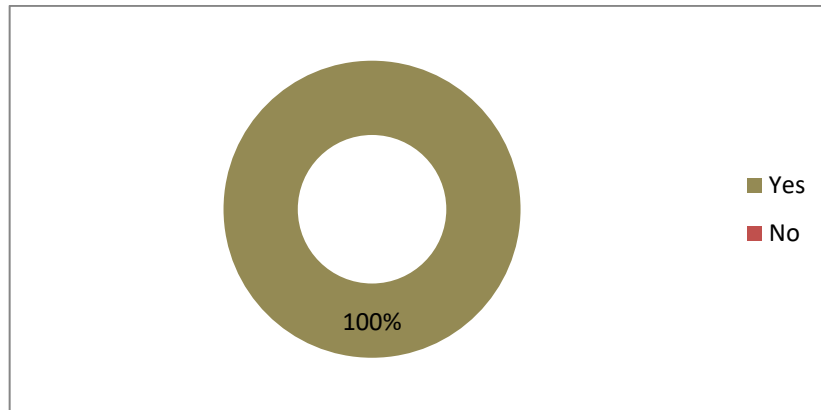


Figure 2.9: Students’ Experiences with Group Work

In figure 2.9, the whole participants with percentage 100% experienced group work in English classes, in order to do their writing tasks. This justifies that students are familiar with cooperative learning.

Section 3: Attitudes towards Cooperative Learning

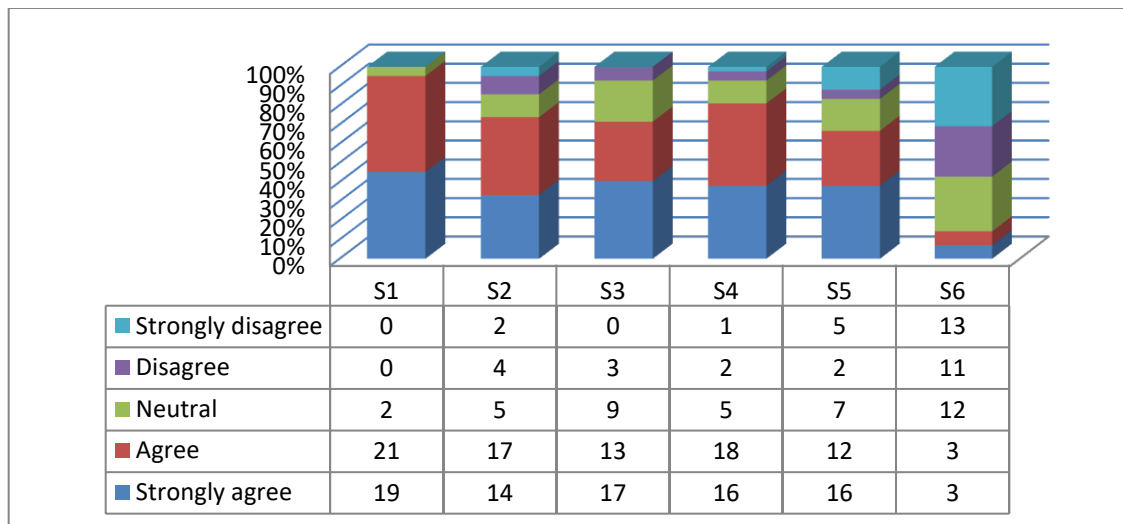


Figure 2.10: Students’ Attitudes towards Cooperative Learning

As it is illustrated in the figure 2.10, the researcher provided six different Likert-scale statements in order to explore students’ opinion regarding group work. The first statement was about working in groups and easiness of writing tasks, 19 (45%) of students stated that they are strongly agree with the statement, 21 (50%) of students are agree, 2 (5%) of them were neutral, and no one refused the idea. (S2) dealt with students’ views about the

usefulness of group work in organizing their ideas, 14 (33%) of participants claimed that they are strongly agree, 17 (40%) agree, 5 (12%) neutral, 4 (10%) disagree, and 2(5%) strongly disagree. **(S3)** focused on motivation, 40% of respondents strongly agreed that working with their classmates motivates them, 31% of them agreed, 21% were neutral, and one student who represent (7%) disagreed. **(S4)** emphasized on the idea that group work helps students learn from their peers, 38% of participants opted ‘strongly agree’ option and 43% chose ‘agree’ option. However, 12% participants were neutral, 5% disagreed, and 2% strongly disagreed. **(S5)** addressed students’ confidence in sharing their writing, 38% of students reported that they strongly agree, 28% agreed that they feel confident in sharing their writing with a group, 16% were neutral, 5% disagreed, and 12% strongly disagreed. The last statement aimed to see whether students feel anxious when they present their ideas in front of others or not. 13 (31%) of students revealed that they are strongly disagree, 11(26%) students disagree, 12 (29%) neutral, 3 (7%) agree, and 3 (7%) strongly agree.

After analyzing the above chart, the results indicated that the majority of students do not find difficulties in working with groups, on contrary; working with their classmates helps them improve their learning, boosts confidence, and increases motivation among students. Although, some stated that they face difficulties with group work, but they supported the way of learning. Overall, this explains that cooperative learning has a positive effect on students’ writing and performance.

Q7. What challenges do you face when working with others on writing tasks?

The purpose behind asking this open-ended question is to provide students with ample opportunity to give the main challenges they face when working in groups. Students in this question answered by emphasizing on the level of their mates in writing, they see that the differences in levels affects them, which makes only some students work in the group and

the others just watching or disturbing them. Moreover, other students claimed that when they present their idea; others do not focus with them and sometimes a conflict of views arises. Additionally, other participants believed that since group work depends on the principle of majority opinion, some students feels that it limits their freedom of expression. Even some students have stated that they have difficulties in the language itself; that may lead to difficulties in discussions and presenting their thoughts in English.

2.4.1.3 Discussion

Based on the results obtained from students' questionnaire that was administrated to third year EFL secondary school students, the results were satisfactory. That is interpreted as follows:

First, section one (background information): as it can be seen from the results, the majority of EFL students like to learn English language. Their level in the language itself is acceptable, and their marks in English as a subject are also acceptable. This means that students are interesting in learning the language despite their level.

Second section aimed to measure students' writing level in English and their acceptance to group work. The results showed that mastering writing skills is not easy; the evidence is students' level who described their level in writing as acceptable. Furthermore, most of students when they write they find difficulties in the four aspects: grammar, vocabulary, organization, and coherence. The participant showed a good understanding of the concept of group learning since they experienced it before, they confirmed their tendency to write with groups or in pairs because they feel more comfortable sharing their ideas with their classmates, group work helps them to learn from each other, allows them exchange their knowledge comfortably, and motivates them to write more.

In section three, the questions addressed students' attitudes towards group work. Although, some students stated that they face some difficulties during group work such as, conflict of views and difficulties in presenting ideas. However, many students confirmed that group work has a great role in motivating and enhancing students' writing in classrooms. They stated that through group work writing becomes easy, which helps students learn from each other, boosts confidence, and promotes interaction.

2.4.2 Teachers' Questionnaire

2.4.2.1 Description of Teachers' Questionnaire

The second questionnaire was devoted to teachers, it consists of 17 questions divided into three sections. Its aim was to get teachers' perspectives and experiences regarding the implementation of CL in improving EFL secondary school students' writing skills. The first section was about teachers' personal information. The second part focused on teachers' opinions about the most difficult skill for students to master and teachers' evaluation of their students' level in writing skills. The last section was concerned with the teachers' attitudes on the use of CL. The questionnaire was administered to 10 secondary school teachers from different schools. The questions of the questionnaire were a mixture of close, open-ended questions, and Likert-scale.

2.4.2.2 Analysis and Interpretation of Teachers' Questionnaire

Section 1: *Personal Information*

Question 1

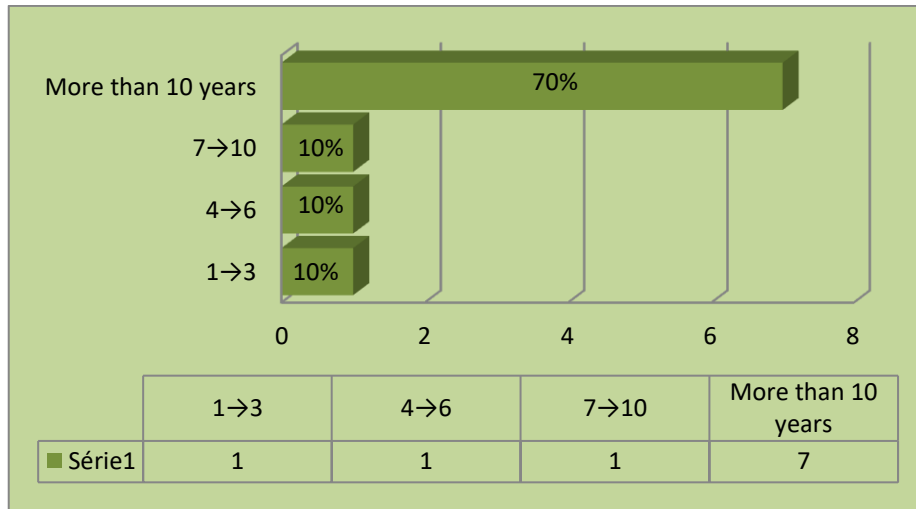


Figure 2.11: Teachers' Teaching Experience

Regarding this question, its aim was to identify the teaching experience of the EFL secondary school teachers. According, as the results show (figure 2.11), the majority of teachers 70% reported that they have been teaching in secondary school for more than 10 years. 10% of them stated that their teaching experience trapped between 7 to 10 years, 10% have spent from 4 to 6 In teaching, and 10% of teachers have been exerting teaching from 1 to 3 years. Thus, the results indicate that teachers involved in this study are experienced; their responses will help in reaching the aim of the research.

Section 2: Writing Skills

Question 2

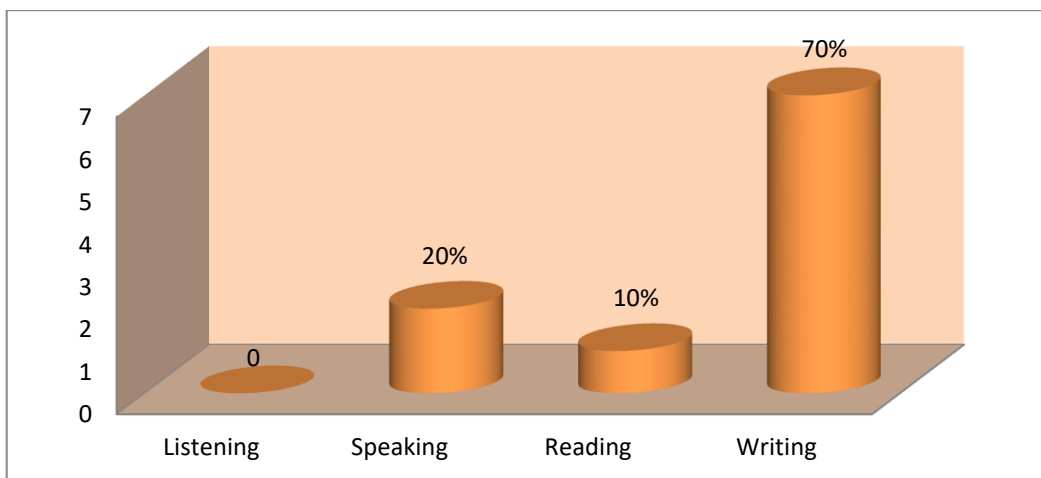


Figure 2.12: Teachers' Perceptions about Students' Most Difficult Skill

The rates (figure 2.12) revealed that 7 (70%) of teachers believed that writing is the most difficult skill for students, 2 (20%) teachers claimed that speaking is the hardest skill. Whereas, one teacher saw that reading is the difficult, no one considered listening difficult. Thus, it can be said that writing is the most challenging skill for students to master in learning English language.

Question 3

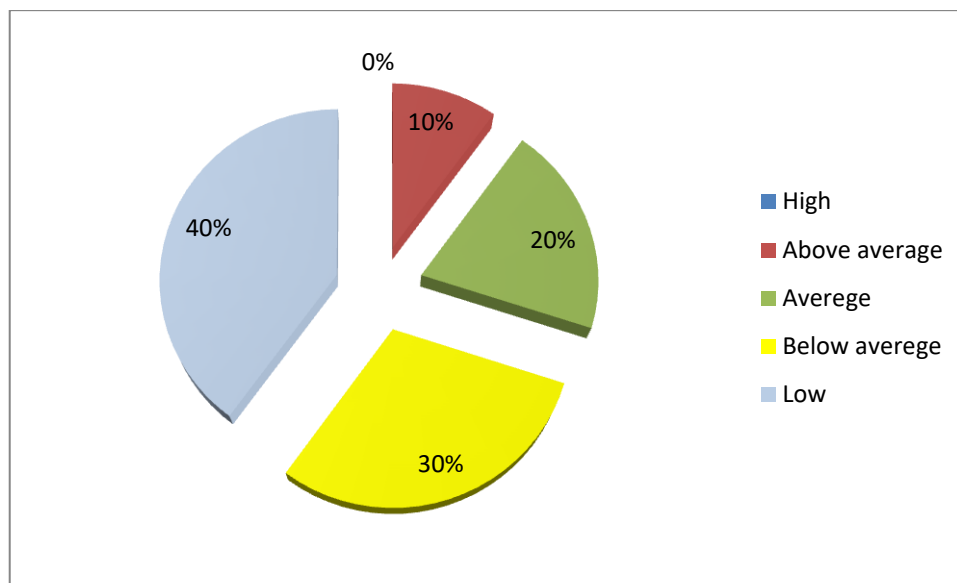


Figure 2.13: Teachers' Evaluation of their Students' Level in Writing Skills

This question aimed to identify the teachers' evaluation of their students' level in writing skills. As the results reveal (figure 2.13), only one teacher (10%) considers his students' level in writing is above average and 2 of teachers (20%) agreed that their students' level is average in writing skills. However, 3 (30%) teachers reported that their students' writing level is below average and 9 teachers who represent (40 %) said that the level of their students is low. No one has opted for the 'high' option. This result demonstrates that the majority of students are not really good in writing skills.

Section 3: Using Cooperative Learning

Question 4

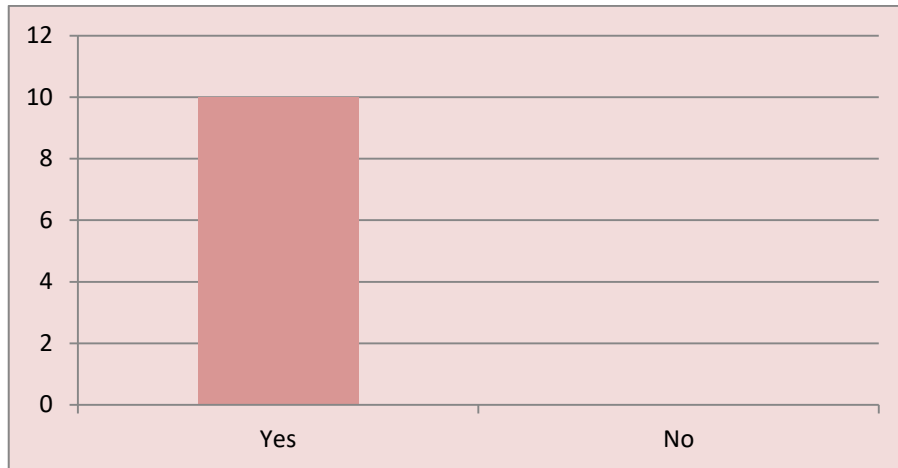


Figure 2.14: Teachers' Implementations of CL Activities

Referring back to the above rates, all teachers (100%) asserted that they have used cooperative learning Activities in their classes. This illustrates that both teachers and students are familiar with cooperative learning activities.

Question 5

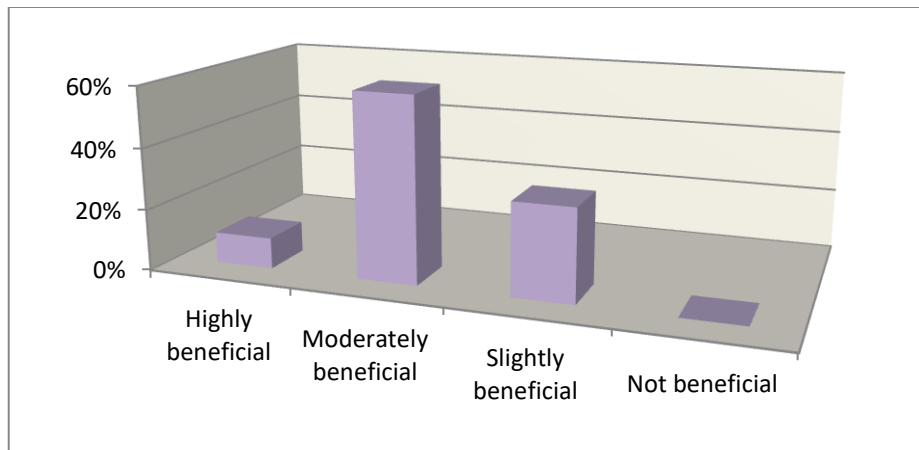


Figure 2.15: Teachers' Perceptions about the Benefits of CL Activities

The results presented (figure 2.15) reveal that 10% of teachers claimed that CL is highly beneficial, whereas 60% of teachers declared that CL is moderately beneficial. However, 30% said that CL is slightly beneficial and no one has opted for the 'not beneficial' option. The shown data reveal that cooperative learning is beneficial in enhancing students' writing abilities.

Question 6

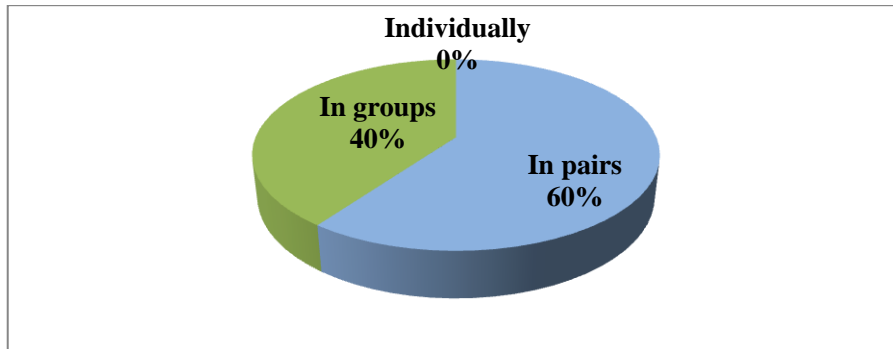


Figure 2.16: Teachers’ Organization of Students in Given Activities

The statistics (figure 2.16) show that the majority of teachers 60% usually when they give their students activities they ask them to work in pairs and 40% of teachers ask them to work in groups and no individual work. They also noted that they organize their students based on the task. This shows the high teachers’ tendency to use collaborative work.

Questions 7, 8, & 9

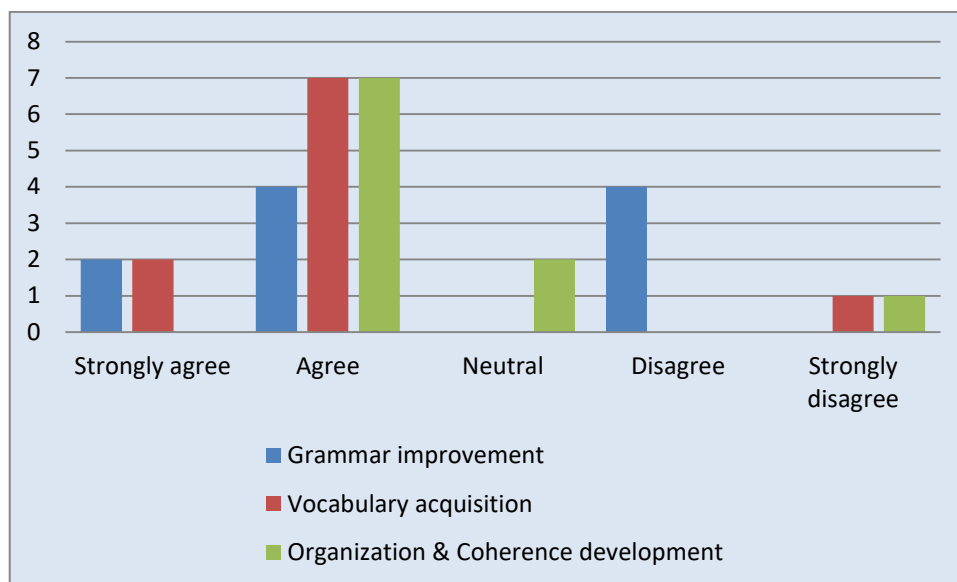


Figure 2.17: Teachers’ Opinions about Cooperative Learning

The aim of these three questions was to explore teachers’ opinions about the efficacy of CL in improving students’ grammar, vocabulary, and organization & coherence. As presented in figure 2.17, 2 teachers with an estimation of 20% strongly agree that CL

improve students' grammar, 4 of them with an estimation of 40% agree; whereas, the rest 4 teachers (40%) disagree. Regarding vocabulary, 2 (20%) of respondents strongly disagree that CL helps students acquire new vocabulary, 7 of them with percentage 70% agree on the fact that CL helps students acquire new vocabulary, and one teacher (10%) who replied with his disagreement. For organization and coherence, the majority of the respondents 70% agree on the fact that students' ability to structure their writing with clear organization and smooth coherence develops when they work in groups, 20% were neutral, and one of the respondents (10%) strongly disagree. These indicate that CL is beneficial; it helps students improve their writing skills (grammar, vocabulary, organization, and coherence).

Questions 10, 11, & 12

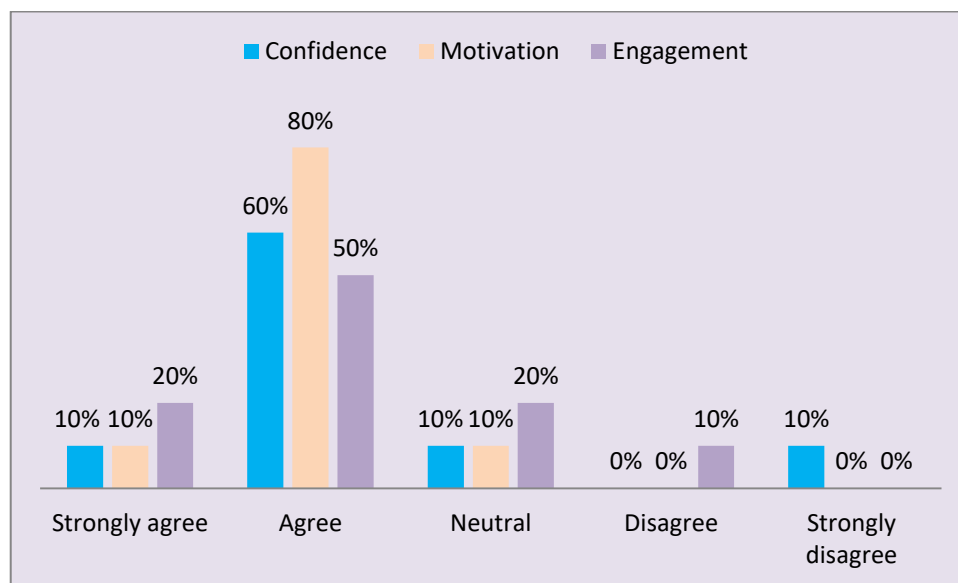


Figure 2.18: Teachers' Reactions to Cooperative Learning

According to the teachers' responses in figure 2.18, a high percentage of teachers (60%) agree that CL increases students' confidence in their writing, 10% of them strongly agree, and 10% teachers disagree. Concerning motivation, 20% of respondents agree that working collaboratively increases students' motivation; the majority of teachers (80%) responded that they agree with the fact that working collaboratively increases students' motivation;

whereas 10% of teachers were neutral. For engagement, 20% of participants strongly agree that CL makes students more engaged in the class, 50% of them agree, 20% were neutral, and 10% replied with disagreement. The above results show that CL has a positive impact on students; it boosts confidence, motivation, and engagement among students.

Question 13

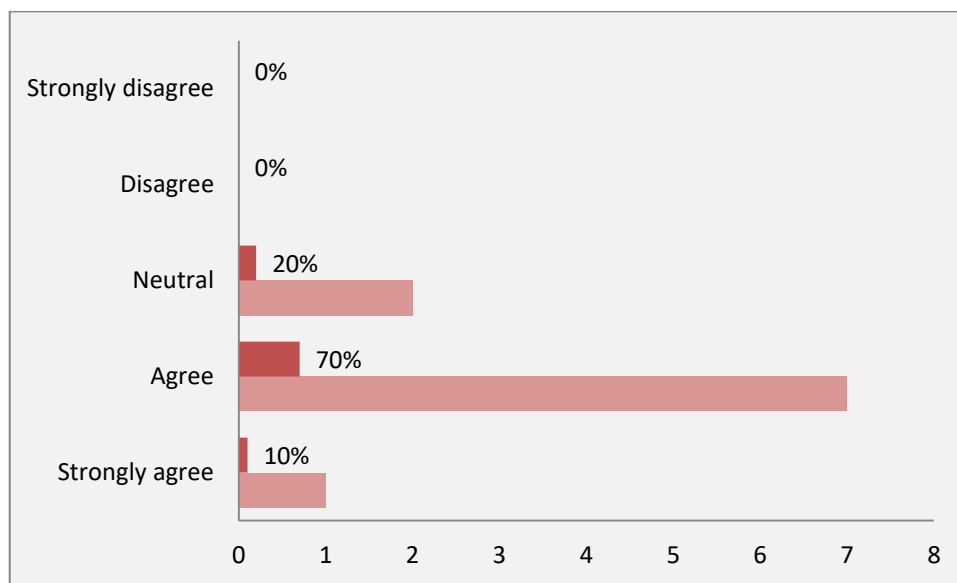


Figure 2.19: Time Constraints in Implementing Cooperative Learning

As it shown in figure 2.19, seven teachers who represent the majority 70% have agreed that implementing CL leads to difficulties in organizing time while implementing CL, 10% of teachers strongly agree, and 20% were neutral. Zero teachers chose ‘disagree’ and ‘strongly disagree’ options. This justifies that time is really a barrier in implementing CL for writing.

Question 14

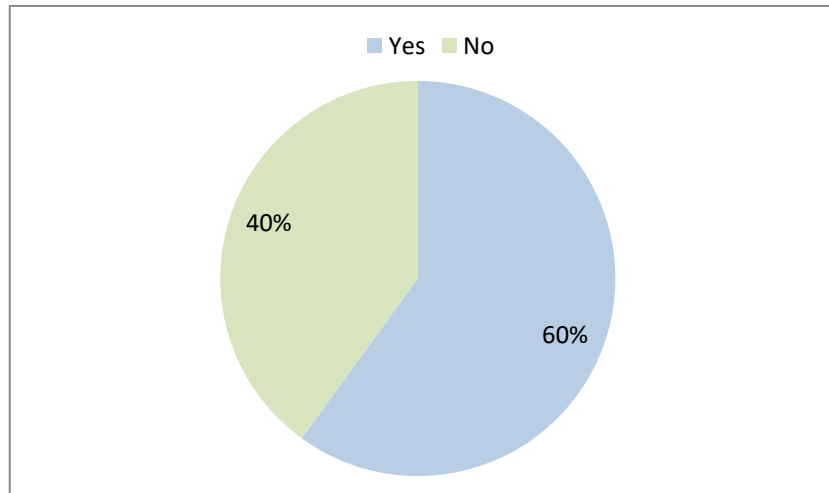


Figure 2.20: Difficulties in Managing Groups

The above figure 2.20 confirms that 60% of teachers find difficulties in managing groups. However, 40% of teachers stated that they have no problems in managing groups. This illustrates that the large number of teachers struggle with managing groups while implementing CL.

Question 15

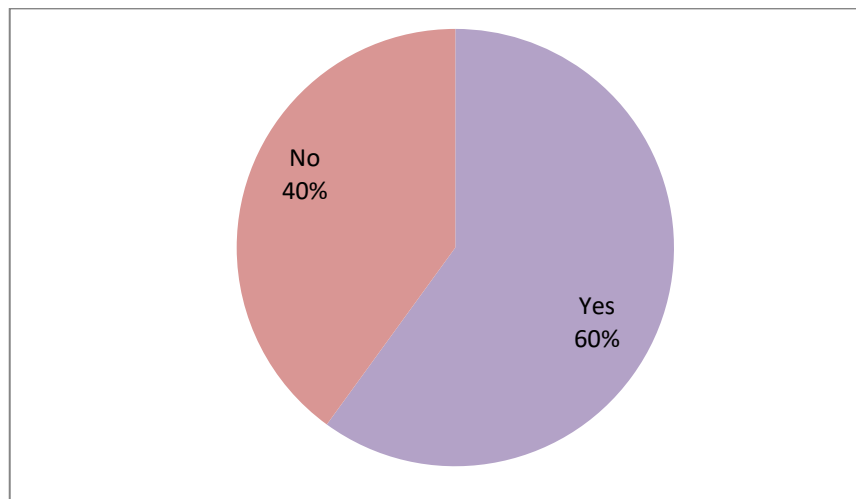


Figure 2.21: The Difficulty of Assessing Individuals Writing performance

It seems from the obtained results (figure 2.21) that 60% of teachers find it hard in assessing students; whereas 40% of teachers reported that they face no difficulties in

assessing them. This indicates that implementing CL results in challenges in assessing individuals writing performance.

Question 16

In this question, teachers were asked to mention other difficulties they face while implementing CL, which are not stated. Some teachers stated that most of the students have a poor level in writing and spend the whole time hindering the good students by creating unnecessary noise. Moreover, other teachers claimed that when they ask their students to form groups, they always notice conflicts between group members and sometimes they do not accept each other's ideas. Others claimed that for home works, some students just sign their names without doing the task. In addition, some teachers repeated the same difficulties such as time management and assessment difficulties.

Question 17

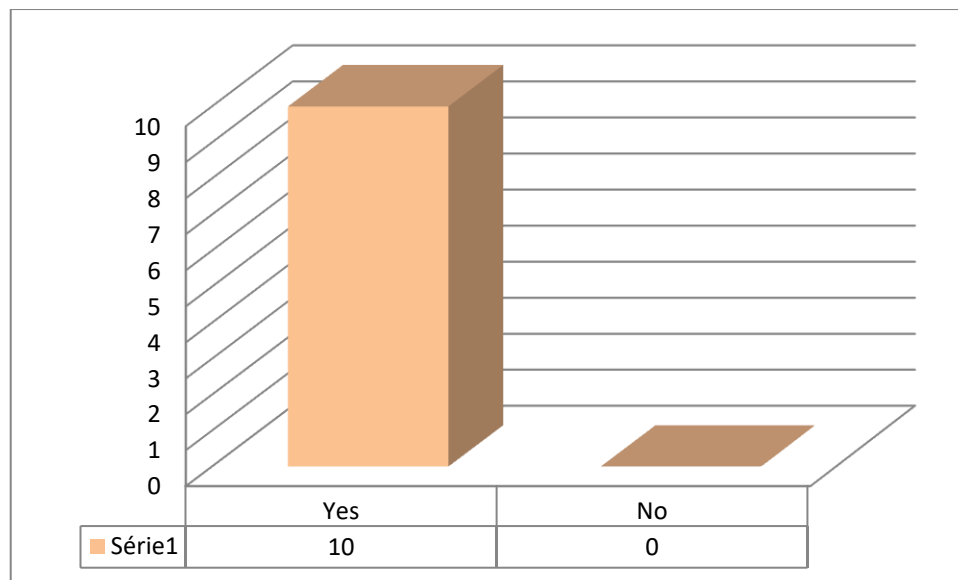


Figure 2.22: Teachers' Recommendations in Applying CL for Teaching Writing

The aim of this question was to see whether teachers support applying CL for teaching writing or not and they were given space to justify their answers. As it is shown (figure

2.22), all the participants with percentage 100% believed that CL is so beneficial for teaching writing since it is based on group work, as they recommended using it. They justified their answers as follow:

CL helps students set certain solidarity between them; it creates motivation in the groups through sharing ideas and helps in acquiring the necessary vocabulary. Furthermore, working collaboratively helps students produce coherent sentences grammatically structured, allows them facing their fears of sharing their thoughts, and increases students' self-confidence in their writing. Additionally, working in pairs or in groups encourages writing peer interaction, collaborative problem-solving, and helps students organize their ideas through interaction and support from each other.

2.4.2.3 Discussion

The data gathered from the questionnaire have displayed the following results:

- ✓ The majority of teachers who are questioned in this study are experienced with more than 10 years of teaching secondary school. This indicates that their responses will be helpful to enrich the topic under investigation.
- ✓ The findings that have been drawn from the analysis of second section showed that writing is the most difficult language skill for students to acquire. Moreover, teachers confirmed that their students' level in writing is low.
- ✓ Furthermore, the analysis of section three revealed that all teachers have used CL and the majority of them agreed that CL is beneficial in enhancing students' writing skills. They believed that integrating CL with writing skills will help students improve their grammar, gain new vocabulary, and structure their writing with clear organization and smooth coherence. Additionally, teachers stated that

students confidence, motivation, and engagement during English class increase when they work collaboratively.

- ✓ Subsequently, it is common to face some problems in implementing CL; teachers' questionnaire had revealed that the majority of teachers are not satisfied with the time, they find difficulties in implementing CL due to limited time. Furthermore, managing groups and assessing individuals are also two obstacles in implementing CL. Despite the challenges that teachers may face in implementing CL, all of them has recommended using it to enhance students' writing skills.

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the field work of the study and introduced in detail the methodology used. The researchers have attempted to analyze and discuss the findings of the gathered data from students' and teachers' questionnaires. The results showed that if students work in groups, they will be certainly able to produce good and acceptable pieces of writing in terms of grammar, vocabulary, organization, and coherence. Group work will increase also students' confidence, motivation, and engagement in their writing.

The findings highlighted also some challenges faced by both, teachers and students during the implementation of cooperative learning. However, as a final conclusion, they considered cooperative learning useful and beneficial in enhancing EFL students' writing skills. Teachers have recommended using CL because it has a positive impact on students' performance.

In summary, with reference to the present study results, it can be deduced that cooperative learning has a positive effect on the students' writing skills. Therefore, we can conclude that the findings have confirmed the hypothesis that the current study is based on.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

Mastering writing skills is one of the main priorities for English language learners, because it helps them success in their academic and professional life. It refers to the ability to express thoughts, ideas, and feelings in written words. However, learners considered it the most complex skill to master as well as teachers found obstacles in teaching it. So, Teachers were obliged to find appropriate method in teaching writing skills, among the methods that gained great popularity is cooperative learning, which has become an effective teaching method in improving EFL writing skills.

The present study aimed to investigate the effects of cooperative learning in enhancing EFL writing skills. The dissertation has divided into two chapters. The first chapter dealt with theoretical framework of writing skills, cooperative learning, and the relationship between them, by relying on previous studies. The second chapter concerned with practical part, aimed to discuss the methodology used in this study and analyze the findings of the data that was collected from two questionnaires. The first questionnaire was administered to third year students in Djeridane Lazhari secondary school in Sidi Makhlouf / Laghouat. The second questionnaire was distributed on 10 teachers mixed between secondary schools of Sidi Makhlouf and Laghouat.

Through this work, we sought to measure students' and teachers' attitudes towards the use of cooperative learning in enhancing EFL writing skills. After analyzing both questionnaires, teachers and students have shown a great interest towards positive effects of CL in enhancing writing skills. The findings indicate that group work helps students improve their grammar, gain new vocabulary, and structure their writing with clear organization and smooth coherence. Moreover, CL helps students gain more confidence,

sharing their ideas freely, and increases interaction and motivation among EFL secondary school students.

The results also showed some disadvantages from both samples in using cooperative learning. For students, they usually face problems like conflict of views and difficulties in presenting ideas. For teachers, they agreed that they usually find difficulties in time management, organization of groups, and assessment of students. Despite these challenges, they supported using CL in enhancing students' writing skills and recommended its implementation.

As a conclusion, this study attempts to provide the students with an effective method to improve their writing skills and provide teachers with a good method to create a good atmosphere for students to learn and interact with each other. On the whole, the findings of this study confirmed the effectiveness of cooperative learning in enhancing EFL writing skills. Thus, the hypothesis of this dissertation has been confirmed and proved.

Study Limitation

While conducting this study, the researcher encountered certain obstacles. First, the number of secondary school teachers was limited, which forced the researcher to visit other institutions in the Wilaya. The absence of students was also an obstacle, which reduced the sample size. Furthermore, some students exhibited insufficient engagement with the questionnaire.

Recommendations

The present research attempted to provide a deeper understanding of the effects of using cooperative learning strategy to enhance third-year EFL students' writing proficiency.

According to what we have seen, the following recommendations are made for further research:

First, since the study adopted questionnaires in gathering data, the researcher recommends using different tools; experiments in particular.

Moreover, since this research was conducted in Sidi Makhoulf secondary school, it is recommended to carry out a research in other schools in Wilaya or other Wilayas with a large sample in order to generalize the findings.

To achieve better results on the same topic further research is highly recommended.

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Appendices

Students' Questionnaire: The Effectiveness of Cooperative Learning in Enhancing EFL Writing Skills: A Case of 3rd Year Secondary School Students (Sidi Makhlouf)

Dear students, you are kindly invited to answer this questionnaire of the study that aims to explore how cooperative learning (CL) activities can improve the writing skills of EFL secondary school students. Your responses will remain completely confidential and anonymous. Your contribution and help are highly requested and appreciated.

Please tick (✓) the corresponding box and give full answers if needed.

Section 1: Background Information

1. Do you enjoy learning English?

Yes

No

2. What is your average mark in English?

0-9

10-12

13-15

16-20

3. How do you rate your current level of English language?

Excellent

Good

Fair

Beginner

Section 2: Writing Skills and Experience

4. How do you evaluate your writing skills in English?

Excellent

Good

Fair

Needs improvement

5. Writing in English is difficult for me:

Yes

No

6. What aspects of writing are most challenging for you? (Choose all that apply)

Vocabulary

Grammar

Spelling

Organization & Coherence

7. What types of writing tasks do you do most often in the class? (Choose all that apply)

Paragraphs

Summaries

Letters

Others.....

.....

8. Which writing format do you prefer?

Working individually

Working in pairs

Working in groups

Why?.....
.....

9. Have you ever worked on writing tasks in a group during English classes?

Yes

No

Section 3: Attitudes towards Cooperative Learning

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1. Working in groups makes writing tasks easier.					
2. Group work helps me organize my ideas better.					
3. I feel more motivated to write when I work with classmates.					
4. Group work helps me learn from my peers.					
5. I feel more confident sharing my writing in a group.					
6. I feel anxious when I have to present my writing in front of others.					

7. What challenges do you face when working with others on writing tasks?

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

Thank you for your collaboration

Teachers' Questionnaire: The Effectiveness of Cooperative Learning in Enhancing EFL Writing Skills

Dear secondary school teachers of English,

This questionnaire is part of a Master's dissertation research project investigating the effectiveness of using cooperative learning (CL) in enhancing EFL secondary school students' writing skills. Thus, you are kindly invited to participate in answering the following questionnaire. I would greatly appreciate to get your perspectives and experiences regarding the implementation of CL in improving students' writing skills. The data will be treated confidentially and will be used only for educational purposes. Your contribution and help are highly requested and appreciated.

Please tick (✓) the corresponding box and give full answers if needed.

Section 1: Personal Information

1. How long have you been teaching in secondary school?

1-3 years

4-6 years

7-10 years

More than 10 years

Section 2: Writing Skills

2. In your opinion, which language skill is the most difficult for students to master?

Listening

Speaking

Reading

Writing

3. The level of your students in writing is:

High

Above average

Average

Below average

Low

Section 3: Using Cooperative Learning

4. Have you ever taught writing using cooperative learning strategies?

Yes

No

5. Based on your experience as a teacher, how beneficial is CL strategies in enhancing students' writing abilities:

Highly beneficial

Moderately beneficial

Slightly beneficial

Not beneficial

6. Usually, when you give your students activities, do you ask them to work:

Individually

In pairs

In groups

7. CL helps students improve their grammar:

Strongly agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly disagree

8. CL helps students acquire new vocabulary:

Strongly agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly disagree

9. Students' ability to structure their writing with clear organization and smooth coherence develops when they work in groups:

Strongly agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly disagree

10. CL increases students' confidence in their writing:

Strongly agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly disagree

11. Working collaboratively increases students' motivation:

Strongly agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly disagree

12. CL makes students more engaged in the class:

Strongly agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly disagree

13. Lack of time is a barrier to implementing CL for writing:

Strongly agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly disagree

14. Do you face challenges in managing groups?

Yes

No

15. Do you face difficulties in assessing individuals writing performance?

Yes

No

16. If there are any other challenges not mentioned in the questionnaire, feel free to mention them here:.....

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17. Do you recommend applying cooperative learning for teaching writing?

Yes

No

Why?

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Thank you so much for your precious time

Résumé

Cette recherche vise à examiner l'efficacité de l'apprentissage coopératif dans l'amélioration des compétences écrites en anglais langue étrangère (ALE) chez les élèves de troisième année secondaire. L'étude cherche à déterminer si les activités d'apprentissage coopératif améliorent la performance écrite des élèves en termes de grammaire, vocabulaire, organisation et cohérence, et si cette méthode influence positivement les attitudes des élèves. L'étude vise également à identifier les principaux défis liés à la mise en œuvre de l'apprentissage coopératif. Pour atteindre ces objectifs, une méthode descriptive analytique avec une approche quantitative a été adoptée. Deux questionnaires ont été administrés à un échantillon composé de 42 élèves de troisième année secondaire au lycée Sidi Makhoulf (Djeridane Lazhari) et à dix (10) enseignants de deux villes, Sidi Makhoulf et Laghouat. Les résultats des questionnaires ont confirmé l'hypothèse selon laquelle l'apprentissage coopératif aide les élèves à améliorer leur grammaire, enrichir leur vocabulaire et structurer leurs écrits avec une organisation claire et une cohérence fluide. De plus, cette méthode augmente la confiance, la motivation et l'engagement des élèves dans leurs productions écrites. Les résultats ont également révélé que les enseignants peuvent rencontrer des difficultés dans la mise en œuvre de l'apprentissage coopératif, notamment en matière de gestion du temps, d'organisation des groupes et d'évaluation des élèves. Par conséquent, l'étude recommande l'implémentation de l'apprentissage coopératif pour améliorer les compétences écrites en ALE des élèves.

Mots-clés: Compétences en Écriture, L'apprentissage Coopératif, ALE

المخلص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى التحقق من فعالية التعلم التعاوني في تنمية مهارات الكتابة باللغة الإنجليزية لدى تلاميذ السنة الثالثة ثانوي. تسعى الدراسة إلى تحديد ما إذا كانت أنشطة التعلم التعاوني تُحسِّن أداء التلاميذ في الكتابة من حيث القواعد النحوية، والمفردات، والتنظيم، والترابط، وما إذا كان لهذا النمط من التعلم تأثير إيجابي على اتجاهات التلاميذ نحو الكتابة. كما تهدف الدراسة إلى تسليط الضوء على التحديات الرئيسية التي تواجه تطبيق التعلم التعاوني. ولتحقيق أهداف الدراسة، تم اعتماد المنهج الوصفي التحليلي مع التركيز على المدخل الكمي. حيث تم توزيع استبيانين على عينة مكونة من 42 تلميذا من السنة الثالثة ثانوي بثانوية سيدي مخلوف (جريدان لزاهري) وعشرة (10) مدرسين من منطقتي سيدي مخلوف والأغواط. أكدت نتائج الاستبيانات صحة الفرضية القائلة بأن التعلم التعاوني يساعد التلاميذ على تحسين قواعد اللغة، واكتساب مفردات جديدة، وتنظيم كتاباتهم بشكل مترابط و متماسك. كما أن التعلم التعاوني يعزز ثقة التلاميذ بأنفسهم، ويزيد من دافعيته، ويحفز مشاركتهم في أنشطة الكتابة. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، كشفت النتائج أن المدرسين قد يواجهون صعوبات في تطبيق التعلم التعاوني مثل إدارة الوقت، وتنظيم المجموعات، وتقييم التلاميذ. وعليه، توصي الدراسة بتطبيق التعلم التعاوني لتحسين مهارات الكتابة باللغة الإنجليزية لدى التلاميذ.

الكلمات المفتاحية :

مهارات الكتابة، التعلم التعاوني، اللغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية