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The Importance of Group Work Activities in Enhancing EFL Classroom

Interaction

The case of Second Year Students at Habba Abd El Madjid

Secondary School - El Meghaier

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Declaration

I, **Berroussi Dounia**, do hereby solemnly declare that the work I am going
to present in this dissertation is my own, and has not been submitted before to
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Dedication

I sincerely dedicate this work to:

To the most precious parents in the world, to my lovely Mum 'Souad' for her sacrifice, patience and prayers. To the memory of my Father 'Abd El Djabar' who would be proud to see my work.

To my grandmother and to the memory of my grandparents may Allah bless them.

To my sisters 'Nadia', 'Meriem' and 'Malak', my Brothers Lakhder, 'Zohir' and 'Abd El Malek' for their encouragements.

To my aunts and uncles, and all my cousins from the oldest to the youngest one.

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To all my friends and colleagues with whom I share university life.

To my secondary, middle and primary school friends.

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Abstract

Our study tends to investigate the role of group work activities in the process of interaction in foreign language classrooms. It aims at gaining understanding of both concepts (group work and interaction); in other words, whether group work can be an effective pedagogical strategy to improve peer interaction (student-student interaction) or not. Therefore, it is significant to investigate how interaction occurs within the groups and what are the major factors and challenges that hinder students from interaction and teachers when set for group work. In addition, it is important to determine students' attitudes toward group work activities, its effects on the classroom interaction and finally the role of teachers in finding alternatives to improve interaction within groups. For that reason we have hypothesized that the effective use of group work activities helps students to have positive attitudes toward and at the same time improves classroom interaction. The study was conducted in El Meghaier at Habba Abd El Madjid Secondary School using observation and post-questionnaires as two main instruments to collect data in order to confirm or reject the hypothesis. Classroom observation and students questionnaire involve thirty-one (31) 2nd year students-scientific stream; whereas, teachers' questionnaire is conducted with nine secondary school teachers (8 from El Meghaier and one from El Hamraia). The results reveal that the majority of students have positive attitudes toward group work in which they enjoy and become active to some extent when they work with others. Therefore, using group work as a pedagogical strategy has a significant role in helping students to be more active through creating more chances for student- student interaction to share knowledge.

Key terms: Group work, classroom interaction

List of Abbreviations & Acronyms

ALM: Audio-Lingual Method

CF: Corrective Feedback

CLL: Cooperative Language Learning

EFL: English as Foreign language

ESL: English second language

etc: et cetera

GTM: Grammar Translation Method

i.e.: idée est

L$_1$: first language

L$_2$: second language

min: minutes

MKO: more knowledgeable others

MT: Mother Tongue

SLA: Second Language Acquisition

SLT/L: Second Language teaching and learning

STAD: Student Teams-Achievement Divisions

TGT: Teams-Games-Tournament

TL: Target Language

TLT: Traditional Language Teaching

TPS: Think-Pair-Share

VAK Model: visual- auditory- kinesthetic model

VS: Versus.

ZPD: zone of proximal development

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الملخص

General Introduction

In general, we learn any language in order to be able to communicate and interact with others; therefore, language is the core and a source of communication. In EFL contexts, foreign language learners may encounter some difficulties and factors (internal or external) that hinder their interaction. For that reason, it is significant for teachers to be aware of these factors as well as to be aware of the importance of interaction in the classroom and try to use different strategies that may maximize interaction and reduce the effects of the factors, which hinder the interaction process. One of the strategies used in the late twentieth century is the group work, one of the cooperative learning strategies.

Group work is to make students work together. This strategy opens new space where students can share their ideas with each other freely, also it saves teacher's time and effort of correcting individual products; therefore, it can raise classroom interaction. Moreover, interaction is one of the indicators of learning engagement, it is when learners show more attention, interest, and motivation in the learning setting; or when the teacher gives opportunities to students for decision making, program designing…etc.

The notion of interaction was introduced in constructivism theory of learning that was led by Brunner and later on by J.Piaget and Vygotsky. It focuses on the relation between society and individuals. Also it highlights interaction as pedagogical mean to share ideas, experiences and to be assisted by those whom are more knowledgeable (MK). For instance, a teacher, classmates…etc. Through this way students will construct understanding, acquire knowledge, and improve their skills. Constructivism theory spots more lights on students; in other word, it shifts from a teacher-centered to a student-centered classroom.

1. Statement of the problem

In EFL context, in order to be able to communicate or interact with others, students have to develop the basic skills. Interaction is significant in language teaching and learning; however, some students may encounter many challenges that impede their interaction and learning process. This is the case of second year secondary school students who show passive attitudes toward English sessions, this passivity takes many forms such as lack of participation, silence, anxiety...etc. In fact, some teachers find it challenging to motivate some students if they are unaware of the real cause of the problem, or when students keep following teachers with their eyes, but in fact, they are absent-minded. As a result, teachers

introduce group work as one of the pedagogical strategies to create more opportunities for students to talk and enhance their interaction.

Working in group activities allows students to share knowledge with classmates before transmitting it to their teacher. As well as, it motivates them to take part in classroom interaction (being active participants). Many Algerian teachers fail to apply group works effectively; this problem occurs supposedly because the task itself may not reflect the lesson objectives or it is unclear for students, the lack of preparation from both teachers and students, or because of some factors that hinder students from interacting such as anxiety, lack of confidence…etc. Therefore, teachers must identify the external and internal factors that may hinder group interaction and take them into consideration. In this study, we are going to focus on the role of group work in enhancing classroom interaction.

2.   Significance of the study

This study is intended to be beneficial for both English secondary school teachers and students. First, it would assist teachers to be more aware of the importance of classroom interaction and encourage them to improve it using group work strategy. Second, it aims to gain insights about students' attitudes toward group work; this strategy would be helpful in making students more socialized through interaction and sharing ideas with their partners. Finally, this research can be used as source for teachers and reference for future researchers who are interested in improving interaction and learning outcomes using cooperative learning.

3. Research aims

General aims:

- Determining the role of group-work activities in promoting classroom interaction.
- Motivating the students to be a part of an interactive classroom.

Specific aims:

- Understanding the factors that hinder students from participating in group work activities.
- Investigating teacher's roles while engaging in group work activities.

4. Research Questions

1. What are the effects of using group work on classroom interaction?
2. What are learners' attitudes towards the use of group work?

Sub-questions:

1. What are the factors that hinder students from participating in group work?
2. How can teacher use group work activities to raise students' interaction?

5. Research Hypothesis

If teachers used group work activities effectively, learners would have positive attitudes (being active participants); therefore, the level of interaction will be highly increased.

6. Research methodology

This study is based on mixed method approach as the appropriate way to investigate the role of group work in enhancing classroom interaction in addition to gather reliable data about the respondents' opinions and attitudes concerning both group work and interaction.

6.1. Data collection tools:

Concerning the data collection tools, we have used classroom observation that may help us to observe how interaction occurs within 6 groups (each group made of 5 students and one group with 6) and to get insights of the students' attitudes toward group work. In addition, we have used two questionnaires, the first one is structured questionnaire that was administered to second year secondary school students; whereas, the second is semi-structured questionnaire submitted to secondary school teachers.

6.2. Population/Sample

The sample of this study was restricted to second year students at Habba Abd El Majid secondary school in El Meghaier; the study involves only one class of 31 students-scientific stream (total number of population (N59). Population has been chosen because students were already acquainted with group work and cooperative learning activities.

7. Structure of the study

The current study is composed of two main parts: theoretical and practical. The theoretical part is divided into two chapters; the first chapter is titled 'The role of group work in EFL classrooms' where we have provided definition of the group work, its general characteristics and its history where we shed lights to Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development. Besides, we make clear distinction between Cooperative Language Learning and Traditional Language Teaching, and then we have discussed the main elements and techniques of group work. We have focused as well on mentioning some benefits of group work in addition to its aims and how it is implemented. Finally, we have ended up with Teachers' roles and some challenges that may face them when using group work activities. The second chapter consists of definition of interaction in teaching and we have made the association between the two variables group work and classroom interaction. Then, we have mentioned its main types, principles and aspects. After that, we have talked about the importance of classroom interaction, and how it creates opportunities for student-student interaction. then we have mentioned major factors which hinder group interaction and provide some tips to promote interaction. However, in the practical part or the third chapter, we have describes the methodology used, provide data analysis and interpretation or discussion of the results obtained from classroom observation, teachers' and students' questionnaires which helped us to draw conclusion about the hypothesis. Finally, we have ended up with recommendation, limitation and General conclusion to the dissertation.

Chapter One

The role of group work in EFL classrooms

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Introduction

With the establishment of new methods in foreign language teaching and learning (FLT/L), there was clear shift from teacher-centered to student centered. Through this approach, students become no longer passive listeners; it enables them to discuss their ideas freely without fear of making errors. One of the various methods is group work (as one strategy of the cooperative learning), it was great opportunity for learners to share what they think about, learn from each other and correct their mistakes thus to expand their knowledge.

This chapter is devoted to highlight some definitions of group work and its general characteristics. Moreover, in order to understand how group work emerged, we need to shed lights back into Vygotsky's theory of the *zone of proximal development* (ZPD). Therefore, a distinction between Cooperative Language Learning (CLL) and Traditional Language Teaching (TLT) must be clearly made; then we will discuss the importance and the major techniques of group work. Finally, we will conclude with some challenges and the role of teacher in overcoming them.

1. Group work

1.1. Definition of group work

In Foreign Language (FL) context, there are various methods that learners where exposed to for better achievement and performance. Among these methods is group work one of the instructional strategies of cooperative learning, it creates an opportunity for learners to share their ideas and know how others are thinking.

According to McDermott (2002, p.5) "group is made up of people with a shared interest", and he added that working with others might be "productive, helpful, and enjoyable"; yet, it can be "source of stress and tension" (p.3). This means that in one side, some students enjoy when changing their seating or turn to their classmates to form groups; they combine their efforts to reach the final product of a common task, which the teacher is

expecting it to be better than individual products. In the other side, other students do not feel safe when they work with their classmates, which may result in a sort of anxiety and stress.

Generally, students learn by saying things, discussing or trying to explain their opinions better than passively receiving teacher's input without making contributions (output). Cohen and Lotan (2014, p.1) argued that "groupwork as students working together in a group small enough so that everyone can participate on a clearly assigned learning task". This latter can be explained that one of the main characteristics of group work is that it should be small where it provides more opportunities for learners especially passive ones to experience cooperative learning and student-student interaction.

The study of groups (as a general term in different fields) started in the United States (US) mainly in the1940s by Kurt Lewin (socio-psychologist). Years later, interests in the concept were clearly remarked until it reached the academic field. It was a result of awareness of the importance of the group thinking than the individual one; Dornyei and Murphey (2003, p3) stated, "Group has greater resources than single member alone". In addition, they mentioned that students could be more powerful when they work within social and unified group thus features of the group "influence the rate of learning and the quality of time spent in class". (ibid).

Almost all definitions of group work said by scholars and researchers are similar even if the expressions were different. Overall, a social group is the one that based on interaction among its members, has particular objectives to achieve within a certain task given.

1.2. General characteristics of group work

Brown (2000) claimed, "Human beings are group beings". This means that we live within group called family, friends in campus and we study and play in groups, but we have to remember that not every grouping of students or people sitting together is necessarily a 'REAL' group. For that reason, it is important to distinguish the real group from the non-one through recognizing its general characteristics. (Cited in Dornyei & Murphy, 2003).

In any group, there are basic characteristics that must be found which are communication and interaction, shared identity, roles, values and norms, influence and interdependence. There must be a kind of communication and interaction among the group members where they discuss the given task in order to understand it and share knowledge for achieving the shared goals of the classroom task, also for the sake of raising the sense of belonging and social relations. The group should be well organized and unified with specific

roles that are predetermined and distributed by the teacher for each member of the group, in addition to some values and norms to follow and that may distinguish them from other groups. Moreover, this technique can be an influential source where one opinion is influenced by other members' opinions; this latter can create a sense of positive interdependence where the members accept the ideas and decision of the group. (Forsyth, 1999 cited in McDermott, 2002; Sessa & London, 2008).

1.3. The roots of group work (Brief look at Vygotsky ZPD)

There is absolutely no method or theory comes from nothing, they are the result of different inquiries in different fields not necessarily education. Cooperative learning was inspired from constructivism theories lead by the two main figures Lev Vygotsky and Jean Piaget; "They share the common belief that classrooms must be constructivist environments" where students are able to construct knowledge and understanding by themselves through interaction and cooperation with others. (Nura & Zubairu, 2015, p.72).

Shedding lights back to cognitive theories mainly Vygotsky's theory of learning and child cognitive development, in 1930's, the psychologist Lev Vygotsky developed a theory of *Zone of proximal Development* (ZPD). He defined ZPD as "distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem-solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers." (Vygotsky, 1978, p.86). In short, it is the gap between what they know (current knowledge) and what they need to know in future (targeted knowledge), which is beyond their present abilities.

Vygotsky determined the association between learning and development claiming that as children born, they start learning and developing their cognitive abilities; hence, learning is not just related to schools. It is the result of the contact between individuals and people of different knowledge level. Generally, children have some preschool knowledge before starting their formal education; they acquire this knowledge from their parents first, then from the surrounded environment through observation and imitation (Vygotsky, 1978). Furthermore, society and cooperative engagement played a significant role in the process as Vygotsky mentioned that they allow children to construct understanding of their surrounding and combine their previous knowledge to new acquired input. (Broadhead, 2004).

Figure 1.1: the zone of proximal development
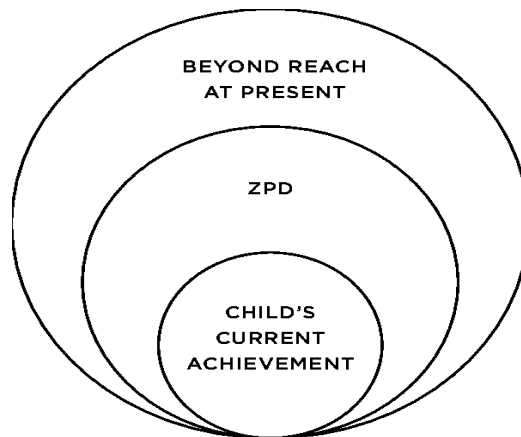
As the figure demonstrates above, child's actual achievement or '*the Actual development level*' refers to the mental abilities that allow to accomplish certain tasks without a need of help, this level is determined through tests given to the child or students. Moreover, there are certain tasks that children cannot perform without guidance (Cohen & Lotan, 2014); subsequently, they start call for assistance from adults or more knowledgeable others (MKO).The extent or the maximum level of difficulty they can achieve with assistance (scaffolding) is their '*Proximal development*'. The final level, '*Beyond reach at present*' indicates the complex knowledge and tasks that are beyond children's abilities. (Vygotsky, 1978). According to Vygotsky, children's mental abilities should not stop at only what they know or can perform by their own; likewise, they should be motivated by the teacher or classmate to extend their knowledge and achieve higher level (McGraw-Hill Education, 2016).

2. Cooperative Language Learning vs Traditional Language Teaching

One of the questions that raises a debate is 'which is the most effective Cooperative Language Learning (CLL) or Traditional Language Teaching (TLT); more precisely, individual or group learning? In fact, we cannot judge the successfulness of one teaching approach over another only if this claim was proved by statistical research. Since conditions of teaching and learning are not the same in addition to the diversity nature of human, one approach cannot be appropriate for all learning situations (Jacobs, Masson, Harvill and Schimmel, 2010). In the first place, we need to spotlight on the two concepts (CLL and TLT) by understanding their principles and their main features, which help us to draw a clear distinction between them.

Zhang (2010) set the differences between CLL and TLT; he claimed that TLT was an approach where teaching was *teacher-centered*. In other words, the teacher was the only

source of information, feedback and a major provider of assistance whose role was to control the classroom setting and to give instructions. However, students were passive receivers of information and memorizers of rules. At that time, the teaching methods used were Grammar Translation method (GTM) and Audio-Lingual method (ALM), and the kind of activities are mostly practicing grammar, translation, role plays, recall knowledge …etc. Students in here work and being assessed based on their individual products. Moreover, there is more interaction from the part of teacher-students in this approach of teaching.

However, with the emergence of cooperative learning that was corn-stone in the field of teaching, there was a great change in the way students used to learn. Teacher's role becomes more as an organizer of the group work and facilitator; besides, students become active participants and more autonomous, it is *student-entered* approach to language teaching and learning. Major tasks in here are problem-solving, sharing and discussing knowledge, where teacher assesses both individual and group products. In this approach, unlike the TLT approach there is active student-students interaction and few teacher-students interaction.

Above all the mentioned differences, both approaches share some characteristics; for instance, both focus on the process of interaction and learners' autonomy (responsible for taking charge of their own learning). They aim also at improving and developing students' communicative skills. Referring to our debatable question, Jacobs et.al (2010) claimed that the majority of people considered group learning as more effective than individual learning simply because in the former approach, students learn from the different ideas they listen from and discuss with others. Studies in the field showed that individual approach work better with simple tasks such as recalling information; whereas when the task is problem-solving, groups seem to perform better than individuals do. Therefore, the teacher should decide the approach that fits and corresponds to the lesson aims, task type and learners needs.

3. Basic elements of cooperative group work

Cooperative learning does not simply mean grouping students to work together, thus, there are certain characteristics and conditions that must be available in the group to be considered as cooperative one. Overall, there are five main elements that serve for the successfulness and effectiveness of cooperative group work which are face-to-face

interaction, positive interdependence, use of social skills, individual accountability, and group processing. (Digby, 1995; Smith, 1996; Johnson & Johnson, 2002).

3.1. Positive interdependence

This element is described as "*We sink or swim together*". The members of the group should work together as one unit, responsible for others' works and behaviours and respond to any help whenever one needs it, which may create kind of mutual understanding and support among the members. The successfulness of the group depends on the successfulness of each member in fulfilling the role assigned to him/her by the teacher (Johnson& Johnson, 2002; Jolliffe, 2007).

3.2. Face-to-Face Interaction

It is the act of discussing the given task by all members of the group, exchanging knowledge, asking questions, providing assistance, explaining unclear elements, sending and receiving feedback for better performance and achieving full understanding of the task. Students should maintain the group unity and confidence among them, which allow making the appropriate decision to solve the problem and achieve the task objectives. (Smith, 1996; Johnson & Johnson, 2002).

3.3. Individual accountability/ personal responsibility – "No Hitchhiking!"

Each member of the group is given a role that he should respect and fulfill without any kind of 'hitchhiking' (not completing the role given to him/her or relying on others' work). In other words, each one should be responsible for his work (Jolliffe, 2007). There is a saying says, "If you do not work, you do not eat", each one of the group should participate fairly and do his/her best for the group success; helps should be provided only for slow learners or for those who really need it (Johnson &Johnson, 2002, p.3). Furthermore, Smith (1996) claimed that the teacher can evaluate students individually to ensure accountability through asking each one to present his/her group product or asking them oral questions.

3.4. Interpersonal and Small-Group Skills

Another important component of cooperative group work is *Group skills*. Group work provides a chance to practice new skills and behaviours before experiencing them in real-life situation (Jacob, Masson, Harvill and Schimmel, 2011). An effective and successful group is the one that know how and when to use the appropriate skills in

specific tasks (Smith, 1996); for that reason, students should have been taught in advance and trained on how to work cooperatively with others using those skills. This latter can be done when teacher assigns different roles to the group and encourages his/her students to practice the skills in particular task, then to reward those who were most skillful or use skills successfully. Furthermore, to reach mutual goals of the activity, students should trust each member of the group, use more clear communication, support and encourage one another, and being able to solve conflicts. (Johnson & Johnson, 2002).

3.5. Group processing

The fifth element is the group processing. It is when the members influenced by the group final product, they make final discussion about whether or not they achieve a positive outcome. Did they reach the required goals or not? How do they assess their work as group and individual works? Whether they maintain the group harmony and unity or not. What does each member provide as an effort, is s/he satisfied or not? All of these make students learn from their mistakes and help them in making the right decisions for the coming group activities (Smith, 1996; Johnson & Johnson, 2002).

4. Techniques of cooperative group work

During these last years, there was a great interest to the use of cooperative learning in education, mainly group work because of its successfulness in many fields. Various techniques were found and added to the field of education in which they all aim to improve students learning. Accordingly, teachers use an eclectic approach in their classrooms (using more than one teaching method); as a result, students become acquainted with different techniques, but we have to keep in mind that what suit one student may not suit another; in other words, students differ in terms of learning styles and intelligences. (Gardner's Multiple Intelligences 1995). The main techniques of cooperative group work are:

4.1. Student Teams-Achievement Divisions (STAD)

Student Teams-Achievement Divisions or STAD was originated by Slavin at Johns Hopkins University, who claimed that in this method, students with mixed gender and different levels or abilities are combined into small groups of four or five to accomplish certain tasks. Each group is a 'microcosm' i.e. it represents the whole class; moreover, this

technique encourages students to do their best to improve individual and team performances (Slavin, 1991). Steps of the STAD are summarized as follows:

Table 1.1: The components of the STAD technique

STAD Components	Description
1/Class presentation	The teacher presents the lecture before starting the group work.
2/Teams	Students join to their groups and work together on the task in the way that help them to achieve the mutual goal.
3/Quizzes	Students take individual quizzes without relying on the group (helping each other during the test is not permitted). Scores gained by each student are added to the group score, to see who makes improvement in his/her level by comparing present and previous scores.
4/Team recognition	At the end of the week, teacher recognizes and rewards groups with highest scores or those who make improvement compared to their previous score.

This method helps in changing students' views toward learning, where they start seeing classroom as positive and motivating where teacher is coach unlike tradition classroom where teacher is the boss who likes to control and give orders. As a result, students' friendship and social relationship become stronger than before.

4.2. Teams-Games-Tournament (TGT)

Another method within cooperative group work that was originated at Johns Hopkins University is Teams-Games-Tournament (TGT), it resembles STAD technique in the way groups are formed; however, it aims at ensuring students comprehension to the task using games. It is used weekly where three members from different groups compete in tournament tables; each table compromises a level; for instance, table of students with high performance level, another with average, and one with low level (this division is based on the students' previous performance). Each week, the task changes based on a system that makes this technique mostly fair. After the tournament, the scores recognize the group winner thus the

tournament table winner. A study done in Baltimore high school showed that students who experienced the TGT became motivated and active participants. (Slavin, 1991).

4.3. Jigsaw

The first who introduced jigsaw was Elliot Aronson and his colleagues in desegregated classrooms in order to improve ethnic and racial relations (Kagan & Kagan, 2009). In here, the teacher divides the task into five different sections and asks students to form groups of six. Then, each member takes a section and introduces it to his group, later on students who share the same section meet on the "expert group" where they start explaining their sections to each other. After finishing, each turns back to his team and explains again what have been said and how they discuss the sections in the expert group. As result, this technique allows students to gain understanding of the task in different and exited way. (Slavin, 1991).

4.4. Jigsaw 2

It is an adapted version of Jigsaw that was established by Slavin and his associates at Johns Hopkins University to avoid the issue of rewriting the syllabus into separated sections or parts (Kagan & Kagan, 2009). Like TGT and STAD students are combined into four or five members; Jigsaw 2 is easier than the previous Jigsaw where teacher gives one reading for all students, but each with a different topic, then those with similar topics enjoy to the 'expert group' to discuss their topics and when they return they teach their groups what they have learned. After all, unlike the original Jigsaw, Jigsaw 2 makes use of the STAD 'improvement score system' when students take individual quizzes, the scores are gained into the group score after recognizing the highest scores. (Slavin, 1991).

STAD, TGT, and Jigsaw 2 share three main features which are: the same group size (no more than five students), group and individual improvements are recognized and rewarded (ibid). There are numerous approaches or methods of CL; the above-mentioned are not the only ones, but the most popular (Kagan &Kagan, 2009).

3. Benefits of using group work

For many years, we have seen that foreign language learners are always suffering due to their average English level if it was not low. This latter can be associated with the fact that using English is limited to educational purposes more than real-life situation purposes; in other words, our system of education does not in fact give much interest to using the

foreign language outside classroom. Therefore, the aim of using this method in learning and teaching is to create more opportunities for student-student interaction where students can freely share information with their teammates. Some benefits of group work strategy are discussed as follows:

3.1.Creating positive and effective Climate

Developing social and effective classroom setting has great role in motivating students to communicate and use the target language without any fear or stress (Zhang, 2010). Many students may hate learning just because of the de-motivating climate and negative atmosphere of the classroom; consequently, students' level of concentration, participation and interaction will decrease gradually. Group work is used as mean to provide the necessary positive atmosphere for better understanding and learning thus interaction, discussion, and the sense of belonging among students will increase.

3.2. Promote acceptance

Figure 1.2: Maslow's hierarchy of human needs (1943)
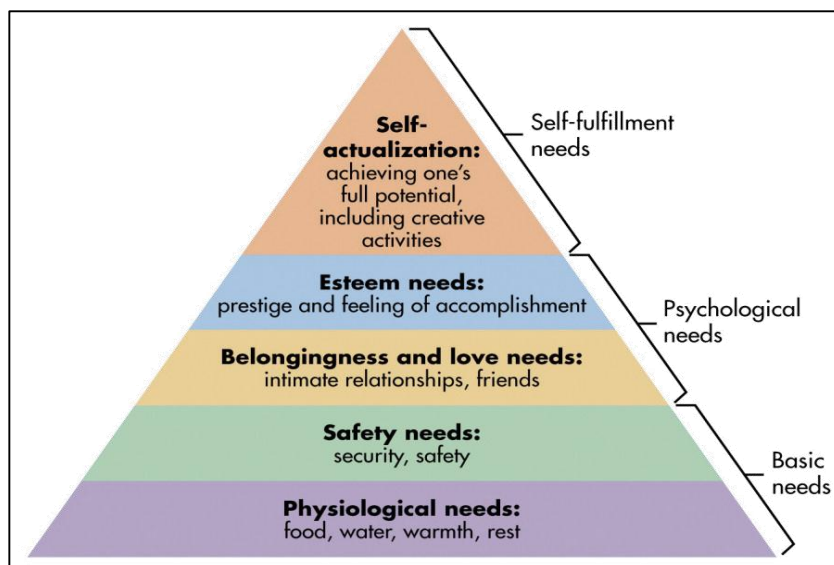
Extracted from Google images 2019

As it is illustrated above in Maslow's hierarchy of human needs, belongingness and love needs are crucial psychological needs. In classrooms, students need to feel acceptance and love by others in order to carry out their learning without any fear or threat. Here group work activities allow students to learn about each other (in terms of names, personalities, skills, attitudes…) because in some cases we find that some learners do not know anything about their classmates even their names. Dornyei and Murphey (2003, p.20) said,

"Acceptance simply does not occur without knowing the other person well enough."; in addition, the lack of tolerance that occurs is due to the little information that we have about our classmates. Therefore, the absence of affiliation sense among the group members may result in unsuccessful group.

Sense of belonging- one factor of a successful group. As Hadfield (1992) stated in his work, it is when students recognize themselves as part and parcel of a given group and define some features if possible, which make them special and distinct from other groups. For instance, giving the group a name such as the Five Stars and the Shadows actually it can make students motivated to engage in the work; thus, it "creates a supportive and enthusiastic atmosphere which is conductive to learning" (p72) and "gives the group this kind of positive self-image and sense of identity" (ibid).

5.3. Comfortable and secure

Lakey (2010) argued that the feeling of safe or comfortable is important in order to learn; this kind of motivational atmosphere may push students to show their real capabilities, develop their skills and support each other. Maslow emphasized on seven human needs required to fulfill any task among them "safe and secure need" which was represented as the second basic need in his hierarchy. Moreover, Hadfield (1992) claimed that sometimes students show insecurity in which they refuse to talk about themselves or give less personal information. This latter is due to the doubt and the lack of trust or confidence between students especially if they do not know each other well that create a barrier leads to group failure.

5.4. Reduce anxiety

One of the factors that may hinder the process of learning and lessen the learner's proficiency is anxiety. Under negative classroom atmosphere, anxiety takes place to break down learners' concentration (Suwantarathip & Wichadee, 2010). It is for that reason group learning is used in which it plays an important role in anxiety reduction, this means that when students work with their classmates their level of anxiety and stress start decreasing, which result in more enthusiastic students, positive and relax climate.

6. Aims of using group work

Many studies have been done about group work, which proved its effectiveness and importance in different fields mainly academic context. Cohen and Lotan (2014) claimed that intellectual and social goals, developing learning (language) and creative problem solving are the main aims achieved in classrooms, which require the use of group learning strategy or technique.

6.1. Intellectual goals

Cohen & Lotan (2014) claimed that the most preferable advantage in joining learners together is the availability of more than one resource (classmates) where each student can freely ask questions, negotiate, discuss, or provide classmates with information; that is it allows them to develop intellectual thinking and "grow academically". Cooperative learning aims at developing cognitive needs of the learners which is related to critical thinking and problem solving where students think together to overcome or solve a problem in given activity (Terwel, 2003).

6.2. Develop social relationship

Using group work inside classroom goes beyond the pedagogical purposes to the social purposes. In other words, when students work together, they will influence one another and foster their friendship relations that result in harmony and maintenance of interpersonal and social interaction among the group members. Sometimes students fail to maintain the group harmony when they are not prepared in advance to work with others, or not acquainted with cooperative learning; consequently, they will find difficulties to sustain the sense of group (Cohen & Lotan, 2014). Furthermore, Terwel (2003) claimed that cooperative learning aims at improving social needs and relationships of the learners that can be improved through interaction between teacher and students and students themselves.

6.3. Language development

In Foreign language classrooms, students aim at improving their communicative skills (speaking and listening). Accordingly, teacher uses group work activities that are interesting and can encourage students to talk. These activities allow students to practice the language where they can discuss and share knowledge freely with their partners without any consideration or fear of making mistakes.

6.4. Creative problem solving

At the very beginning of the task, students may experience frustration and doubt of how to solve the task problem or accomplish the activity. They lack the enough information and the appropriate skills; however, when they start brainstorming and generating their ideas by listening to the different members' suggestions, they may come up with new understanding to the problem that leads to a good solution. In brief, the group can be more intelligent and innovative than individual tasks that require finding solutions to a particular issue. (Cohen & Lotan, 2014).

7. Implementing group work activities in classroom

Until today, there is no particular way or conventions about implementing group work in education (Goodsell, Maher, Tinto, Smith & MacGregor; 1992); yet there are huge number of activities within the concept of group work where teachers have to be selective and chooses what suit students' level and the lesson objectives.

7.1. Group work activities

Some group work activities that used in classrooms are as the following:

7.1.1. Icebreaker activity: or _Round-Robin_ as Kagan and Kagan (2009) called it. It is an informal exercise aims at providing opportunities for all group members to talk and express themselves through sharing information or introduce themselves to the group. For example, this activity can be implemented using a ball and throwing it; the one who receives the ball is his/her turn (Belmont, 2006). This type of activities usually used in first sessions of the group for introduction purpose to create more relaxed atmosphere and to get acquainted. This type of activity fosters the relation and breaks any barriers such as anxiety or stress between the members.

7.1.2. Team interview: the teacher introduces a number of topics for the interview, then students start writing a number of questions they would like to ask and compare their questions with those of their teammates. After all, each time a student stands to be interviewed by his partners. Team interview is usually used for students to get acquainted; as well as to check their comprehension (Kagan & Kagan, 2009).

7.1.3. **Think-Pair-Share (TPS):** it was developed by Lyman at University of Maryland in 1981. This strategy encourages high level of reasoning and thinking in which the teacher gives a certain topic or a question and asks students to think about silently, and then each individual chooses a partner to pair or to discuss with the subject. Later on, the teacher randomly selects some students to share what they have discussed with their classmates in order to ensure individual accountability (Sapsuha & Bugis, 2013).

7.1.4. **Team statements:** this type of activity aims at strengthening and improving the sense of cooperation thus interaction among the group members. Students are asked to write individually definitions or short notes about particular word; for example, happiness, cheating…then they share what they have written with their teammates. After that they use individual statements in order to synthesize them and produce *Team Statement*. In fact, this activity enables students to discover new facts and develop their knowledge from only a word. (Kagan & Kagan, 2009).

7.1.5. **Role-plays:** another important activity that is carried out within group is role-play. In this activity, the teacher assigns groups members different roles to perform in a given scene. (Richards, 2006). This activity makes students more confident and helps them to reduce anxiety and stress.

7.2. Planning the group work

At the beginning of the session, the teacher needs to specify the task objectives by determining the type or the nature of the task and what are learners expected to achieve at the end. Then he chooses the materials that correspond to these objectives. After that, the teacher has to decide the group size and arranges the group. Groups are divided based on specific criteria that serve the task objectives and fit the way of assessment, so they should not remain the same (Kendall & Khuon, 2005). Moreover, large groups should be avoided, and it is better to form small groups of no more than five students because the more group grows in number the more interaction be difficult and the problem rises among its members. Later on, forming a group, which seems to be easy, but the challenging issue is how the teacher and the members can do to maintain the group harmony, cohesion, and unity? (Hadfield, 1992). Furthermore, Cohen, Brody and Shevin (2004) stated that forming a group could be: *structured* is when the teacher "randomly assigns students to groups", *semiopen* where students are joined together taking account to their personal profiles when the task is personal-oriented, and *open* in which students are free to choose their groups. Finally, the

teacher explains the activity and gives explicit instruction (gives an example if possible or a sample to work on it) making sure that all the learners have understood.

8. Different roles in group work

8.1. Teacher's roles

Due to the innovation in education and the implementation of cooperative learning mainly group work. Teacher's role shifts from controller to facilitator and counselor yet s/he plays important roles in the classroom even though it is learner-centered approach. The main roles of teacher are delegating authority, assessor, monitor, prompter…etc.

8.1.1. Delegating authority/ responsibility

'Delegating authority' does not mean at all that the teacher is losing control, authority or quitting his position and responsibilities. It is simply when the teacher assigns roles to make the students responsible for their behaviours and learning and follow directions; yet they are free to hold the task the way they think it works (Cohen & Lotan, 2014). In other words, when the teacher decides to make group work activity, he should not let students free in dividing the roles because this action often result in struggle among them. Therefore, the teacher should have prepared in advance number of roles that correspond to the task aims or wrote them on small papers then each student chooses one in order to be somewhat fair.

8.1.2. Assessor

Here comes a critical question, whether the teacher is going to assess students' performance individually or in groups? Johnson and Johnson (2008) claimed that in this role the teacher assesses both individual and group accountability i.e. how the group works, and how each member performed. Moreover, teacher needs to ensure that all the groups' members are discussing their task together. Furthermore, both quality and quantity of the groups progress will be evaluated at the end of the task.

8.1.3. Monitor

It is when the teacher moves from time-to-time around the groups and intervenes whenever it is needed by providing assistance and feedback checking groups' progress, whether all the members are engaged and participate in the task or not and if there is a sense

of cooperation or each member works individually. Teacher as monitor is one of the main roles that makes groups following instruction and increasing the sense of responsibility. (Johnson & Johnson, 2008).

8.1.4. Prompter

Motivation has an important role in teaching and learning. Students cannot learn if they are demotivated or passive; they need to be intrinsically (self-motivation) or extrinsically motivated (by others) which may push them to carry out their learning; in short, motivation triggers or stimulates learning. Harmer (2007) highlighted teacher's role as prompter claiming that students need to be encouraged or 'nudged' forwards by their teacher mainly when they feel lost, confused or when they forget using positive and supportive feedback. Moreover, teacher should motivate his students to participate and work together in groups, to think critically and creatively. Teacher should be reasonable in using prompts not too little that makes him/her rigid and very strict, and not too much in a way that makes him/her sensitive or losing authority.

Many researchers have used all the above-mentioned roles to describe the teacher who is 'facilitator', who seems to be democratic neither dominant nor authoritarian, aims at facilitating learning using different strategies, supportive norms to motivate students and support them, tries to improve students' autonomy using cooperative approach (group and pair work) (harmer, 2007). Furthermore, the roles discussed previously are only some of the teacher's roles. There are other roles such as teacher as decision maker where he determines the task, the group size, the appropriate materials, the tools of assessing the group products. Furthermore, advisor or counselor another teacher role where s/he provides assistance and feedback when the group face difficulties within the task… etc.

8.2. Students' roles

The first important element is that students have to be aware of the real meaning of group work through recognizing its basic characteristics and pursuing to reach and maintain them that may result in establishing the sense of co-operation among the members (Hadfield, 1992). Moreover, Kendall & Khuon (2005, p8) pointed out three main behaviours that each group should be characterized with which are: "Respect everyone, Follow directions, Ask three, then me." These latter were given the acronym of RFA behaviours by the researcher. First, respect everyone means that the members of the group should respect each other, being

aware that they are not from the same intelligence level, each one prefers different learning style and method; in other words, there must be a respect for any kind of diversity among the members be it mental or physical. Second, follow directions, in which students should learn how to listen to each other without interruption, explain disagreement respectively without losing the contact or trust among them. Third, ask three then me i.e. if an idea or question is unclear, it should be discussed between the members before asking the teacher. Therefore, students should take full responsibility of the task and group management since they are working for the same given end or outcome.

9. Challenges in group work and the role of teacher to overcome them

During teaching process, no matter how experienced teachers are, they will sometimes face some challenges when decide to use group work such as disagreement, hostile, silence. These challenges make teacher the first responsible to solve them; therefore, a good teacher is the one who starts establishing positive atmosphere before engaging in the group work by "relaxing the students and relieving the tension they may be feeling" (Hadfield, 1992. p25). Students at the very beginning could be confused trying to guess what the task is about, they are not sure about their abilities, skills and whether they will be successful at the end or not.

Another challenge that could face any group is the unawareness of others' different interests or learning styles (ibid). For example, some students learn by seeing, others by listening or by doing…etc. If the task focuses on reading activity, visual learners will show more enthusiastic; however, kinesthetic and auditory learners may or may not be interested in the task. According to Fleming (1920's), there are four (4) learning styles: visual, auditory, kinesthetic learners and later he added read/write learning style.

Figure 1.3: Fleming' VAK Model of learning styles (1920's)
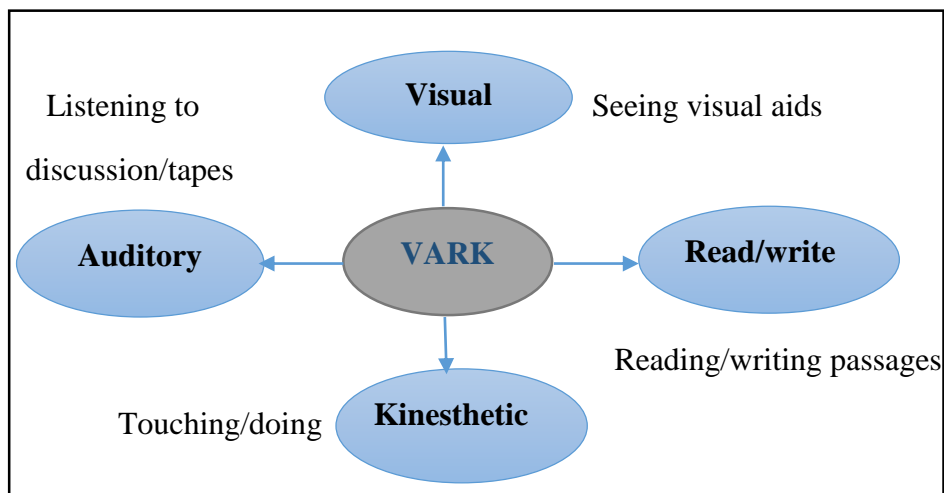
Extracted from Google images 2019

In that case, learners may think that this difference is a source of conflict that may break the group harmony; subsequently, teacher's role is to design mixed activities that suit students' level and different styles. Then to change his students' way of thinking by making them think positively toward these differences; for instance, telling them that they will complete each other thanks to these different learning styles. As a result, two goals could be accomplished at once; the first is making students aware about the different learning styles and the second saving the group cohesion and unity.

Hadfield (1992) highlighted the problem of participation or the absence of balanced discussion among groups. Usually, not all the group members participate equally; for example, we find one or two dominant students who work more than others do, they want to control the situation and make decisions, they are likely to be talkative and motivated to reach their goals. In addition to one who usually refuses to work or to make contribution, s/he seems to be passive and silent learner. This latter can be related to many factors such as of selfishness, in which a student prefers to work alone thinking that working with other is purposeless, wasting of time that in most cases ends with dissatisfying conclusion and unreachable goals; or it can be due to anxiety and shyness in which students are not used to work together.

Figure 1.4: Students' participation in group work
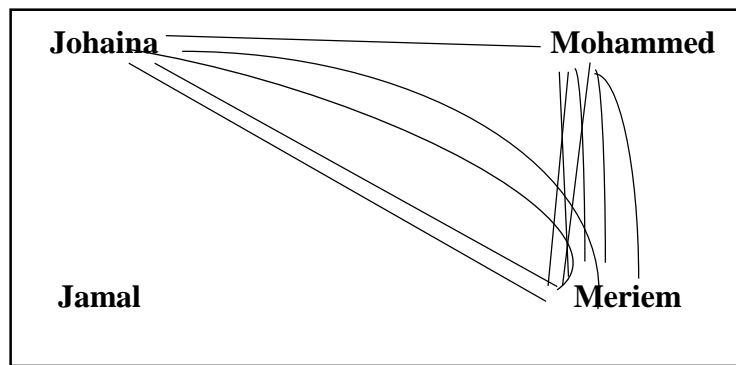
The above figure illustrates a group made up of four students; yet, it is clear that the act of discussion and interaction was active among only three of them (*Meriem, Johaina* and *Mohammed*) whereas *Jamal* was a passive learner and did not initiate any discussion. It seemed that *Mohammed* and *Meriem* were the most talkative; hence, the dominants of the group.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the current chapter has discussed so far the role and the importance of group work in EFL classrooms. This strategy creates new chances for students to express and discuss their opinions, freely ask questions or more clarifications and provides space for new type of interaction (student- student interaction). Teachers should be aware about how and when to use groups, varying the techniques and the types of activities; their roles are crucial in guiding students, assigning or defining roles to the groups, providing them with feedback…etc. Moreover, we have tackled major challenges that may face both teachers and students and which affect the group harmony and cohesion and the role of teacher in dealing with them. On the whole, this strategy can be more effective if both teacher and students respect and maintain their roles in the classroom.

Chapter Two:
Classroom Interaction

Chapter Two: Classroom Interaction

Introduction

Humans as social creatures learn and develop knowledge when they interact with others; therefore, interaction is not only a crucial element in social context, but in academic and occupational fields as well. However, for successful communication, we must be able to understand and produce correct messages. Generally, in EFL classrooms learners are more interested on language use and practice than on acquiring knowledge. They get bored when only sit listening passively to the teacher while presenting a lesson. Classroom interaction as pedagogical instruction or strategy which is required for students' involvement in the learning process; it aims at improving the quality of active participation and effective discussion. There are different activities that are used to promote interaction among them group work activities. Through this chapter, we are going to define interaction in teaching and mention its importance and how it is associated with group work. Moreover, we will discuss two major types of interaction (teacher-students and student-student interaction). Furthermore, we will conclude with some tips that may promote interaction in the classroom.

1. Interaction

1.1. Definition of interaction

Generally, Interaction is the core of communication; it is collaborative process of sending, receiving, discussing, and sharing knowledge, which involves more than one individual in specific context in order to achieve specific objectives or functions (Douglas, 2000; Richards and Schmidt, 2002). Besides, interaction is face-to-face conversation/communication (Lynch, 1996); he added that it is the ability to respond or giving one's own opinion. Therefore, we cannot consider ''one-way spoken conversation'' such as radio and television as process of interaction simply because members there are listeners; they cannot intervene, give or discuss their opinions. Wang and Castro (2010) argued that in teaching and learning context, Classroom interaction is considered as an easy way to facilitate learning; it involves students' participation, teacher talk, the use of group work and role-plays.

1.2. Theory of interaction

The notion of interaction in second language acquisition (SLA) originated by Long (1996) in his '*interaction hypothesis'*. Long believed that through the process of interaction, people can make distinction between their production of the target language and that of others. Based on an investigation done on interaction, it showed that interaction has great role in facilitating learning (comprehension and language acquisition). Moreover, interaction opens channels for students to talk and exchange knowledge using different sub processes within interaction. These sub-processes are providing and receiving feedback, negotiating for meaning or interaction modification such as confirmation checks, repetition, and asking for more clarification in addition to modification of input and modification of output (in response to interaction modification), and this is why interaction considers as multi-faceted approach into language teaching and learning. (Bowles & Adams, 2015).

1.3. Interaction under the umbrella of Communicative Approach

The 1970's was the decade of inspiration and innovation where new methods to language teaching and learning emerged with very different perspectives. It was reaction and an attempt to get rid of the influence of habit formation, stimulation, Grammar translation and Audio-Lingual methods (Brown, 2000). Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) was emerged on late 1970's and early 1980's as an innovative approach to language teaching. Its aim was to develop and master communication all over the world in which teaching changes from traditional approach to modern approach far from memorization, drills into supporting the use of classroom interaction, cooperative learning (pair and group work, role plays…), and feedback. Generally, almost the majority of teachers used CLT that emphasizes on how learners learn the target language and use it for communication; moreover, it focuses also on facilitating learning through specific types of classroom activities, and defining the teacher's and students' roles.(Richards, 2006).

2. Classroom interaction and group work

The concept of classroom interaction is significant in teaching and learning context. It is what distinguishes cooperative learning from other approaches. Jolliffe (2007) argued that effective and meaningful interaction between students on a particular task could be achieved with the use of group work where they focus on achieving their goals. Furthermore, the

greater students are from mixed levels and abilities, the more they will need for interaction among them this is why teachers need to consider how to group students (Lynch, 1996). Both classroom interaction and cooperative learning are included within the umbrella of learning engagement, which emphasize on improving learners autonomy, active learning, critical thinking and communication (ibid). In brief, Group work is one form of learner-learner interaction where it provides a chance for learners to talk and to be active participants in the process of learning.

3. Types of classroom interaction

Chiang (2009) emphasized, "Learning and teaching are not exactly two separate, cognitive processes, but a continual, interactive development." (Cited in Dippold, 2015, p 76). Those processes are carried between two main parties, teacher and students who aim to make the classroom an interactive environment. Accordingly, there are many types of interaction; we are going to discuss only the two main types that are teacher- student interaction and student- student interaction.

Figure 2.1: Types of interaction
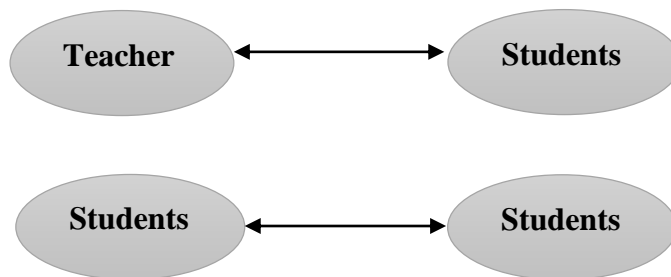
3.1. Teacher- student/ Asymmetrical interaction

It is also called 'Asymmetrical interaction'. Hardman (2016, p.5) suggested, "high quality talk between the teacher and student(s) provides a fertile ground for an active, highly collaborative and cognitively stimulating learning process leading to improved learning outcomes". In other way, the more teacher and students interact through asking questions, initiating discussions and conversations, asking for explanation, providing feedback…etc, the more active students will become, and the better achievement they will get.

Lynch (1996) argued that one form of interaction between the teacher and students is question answer. The teacher in here usually ask questions to check students' comprehension of certain information, task or a lesson; generally, 'question-answer' process involves

initiation-response and feedback. The following examples are extracted from Lynch (1996, pp. 105-107).

Example 1:

Teacher: Is the word 'easy' correct?

Student: yes

Teacher: yes, the word 'easy' is correct.

In the above example, a student is only responding to close-ended question that does not encourage more discussion or negotiation. Whereas in the following example teacher encourages his students to open or initiate discussion:

Example 2:

Teacher: Now do we say 'a old man'?

Chorus: No

T: No we don't say 'a old man'. <u>You know</u> …A is what? A is vowel, […], so we say 'an old man'. O also… o is the beginning of the word, o is a vowel, so we say 'an old man'...<u>You understand, boys</u>?

C: Yes

T: Now the second word is 'sum' look for the right word in column B. what do you add to the word 'sum'? […].

Usman: Today's sum it is easy.

T: No. Just give the one word from column B, just one word

U: 'easy'.

T: 'easy' is he correct?

C: yes.

T: Is he correct?

C: No

T: No, you are not sure. Is he correct? He says 'easy sum' …'easy sum' is that correct?

C: No.

Forms or patterns of interaction are not standard or the same used everywhere; therefore, they differ from country to another, and they change with time. For instance, example 2 is taken from West Africa in the 1960's and the two underlined sentences ('you know?' and 'you understand boy?'…) are examples of comprehension checks that teacher used to ensure whether his student has grasped and understood the information or not.

3.2. Student-student/ Symmetrical interaction

Research on interaction has examined the relation between language development and student-student interaction (symmetrical interaction) in Foreign Language context. The findings pointed out that in this type of interaction, students are free to talk and negotiate, send and receive comments or feedback and it differs from that between a native speaker and non-native learners in the way of providing information simply because natives have various correction strategies (Pica, et al, 1996 cited in Adams, 2007).

In group work, students do not always focus too much on correcting their teammates' errors which encourages more talk and providing full answers. Despite the fact that in teacher- student interaction, students aim to construct full correct sentences and they fear from making errors and mistakes (McCreary, 1986; Porter, 1986 cited in Lynch, 1996). However, sometimes these errors result in communication breakdown (misinterpreting information) which learners are not aware of. Since cooperative learning in general is learner-centered, students have to take responsibility for correcting their errors.

4. Input and output in classroom interaction

Input and output are central concepts in interaction hypothesis and second language acquisition (SLA). They are important for learning and the development of the target language. Teacher's role in here is to encourage his students to receive input as much as possible by being concentrated when listening to others or reading, then to use it back in producing output in speaking and writing.

4.1. Comprehensible input

The term input refers to the language that learners acquired or exposed to. It was first used by Krashen in 1977 in his *'input hypothesis'*; this latter is one of the five hypotheses of SLA that is centered on the fact that learners cannot learn the target language (TL) if the input is not understood or comprehensible (Krashen, 1985). Later on Yule (2010, p.192) supported the idea stating, "We can't process what we don't understand"; therefore, input should be simplified, comprehensible and accessible to the target students. The choice of words is important thus teacher should be selective and careful when using words because students usually remember familiar words then complex ones.

Krashen (1985, p.85) determined, "Exposure does not necessarily entail comprehensible input". This means that in learning and acquiring L_1 and L_2, we cannot

expect input to be always understood. Teacher as information provider should take two main issues into consideration, the first is the comprehensibility of input, and the second is whether students understood or not; otherwise, students will face difficulties in learning and teacher will find himself repeating and paraphrasing again and again that might be time consuming.

4.2. Comprehensible output

In 1985, it was claimed that relying only on the comprehensible input in Second Language teaching /learning was insufficient because there was clear focus on the receptive skills (listening and reading) and ignorance to the productive ones (speaking and writing); therefore, another concept was emerged by Swain that she called *'comprehensible output'*. She claimed the importance of the productive use of language or output in the process of L_2 acquisition and development where it encourages students "to move from semantic processing" to develop both morphological and syntactic processing. (Gass, 2015, p.184). In other sense, in the process of receiving input, students will think only on the meaning of the words; however, in the output process such as speaking or writing passages, the students will find themselves thinking about the grammatical structure and about how to produce sentences with fewer errors.

Another issue that Yule (2010) spotlighted on is interaction in large classes. It is true that producing output is crucial in L_2 learning and acquisition, but it seems to be difficult if not impossible in large classes where students may have less opportunities to speak; consequently, large classes is one of the factors that hinder producing output thus hindering interaction. For that reason group and pair work are used to maximize students' interaction and amount of talk; therefore, students will be able to use the target language, share it with their partners and learn, from them.

5. Aspects of classroom interaction

There are six main aspects of classroom interaction as stated by Tsui (1995). Accordingly, they are: teacher questions, teacher feedback and error treatment, modified input and interaction, teacher explanation, turn-taking behaviour, and student talk (cited in Quenan, 2014). Even if new approaches to language teaching and learning greatly emphasize on student-centered and improving communication, this does not mean at all that teacher's role is ignored in here; conversely, the teacher plays the largest role and paves the way for students to facilitate and guide their learning.

5.1. Teacher's questioning strategies

One pattern of interaction is teacher's questioning strategies that consists of teacher's question, students' answers and teacher's feedback. Generally, in any classroom, teacher's questions are the main usual way to initiate discussion, introduce a topic, check students' comprehension and whether they are involved or not. (Tsui, 1995 cited in Quenan, 2014). Initiating classroom interaction is one of the important roles that any teacher should consider to create an interactive environment. In EFL classrooms, the teacher should improve his/her role as initiator and sustainer of communication by teaching students "repertoire of questioning strategies" simply because students would not have enough strategies to start discussion, unlike teacher who has wide range of tools or questioning strategies which may encourage students to participate. When teacher asks question, students will have some time to think and organize their thoughts; therefore, they will not feel the risk of being asked directly. Moreover, not all types of questions can motivate students; as well as, too many questions do not serve the interactive classroom (Douglas, 2000).

5.2. Teacher feedback and error treatment

When students work together in group-based instruction, they need to develop comprehension while discussing and focusing on the task; even though, their interaction may not always guarantee full understanding. Teacher's intervention helps students to enhance their ability in providing more explanation. (Webb et.al.2009, cited in Markee, 2015). That is when the teacher turns around groups to check their progress or, s/he will ask each group about its work; therefore, students will provide explanation and give details, and this what makes interaction meaningful.

One form of teacher's intervention is providing feedback; Lynch (1996, p.117) described feedback as "any information about the success of the message". However, feedback does not stop only on the teacher; students also can give feedback. Moreover, group work allows students to give and receive feedback from each other and foster it, in which receiving feedback from one not like receiving it from many where the majority agreed on the same opinion. Therefore, "Group feedback is often more powerful than individual feedback" (Jacobs et.al, 2010, p.4). Feedback can take many forms such as teacher's intervention to provide more explanation or advice which help students to interact more with their teacher and foster their ability to provide explanation. Other forms of feedback are as the following:

5.2.1. Corrective feedback

Without teacher's comments or implicit correction, learning will not be valuable and students will feel ignorance since they are not sure whether their answers are true or not. Corrective Feedback (CF) or error treatment is necessary and may help the learners in the process of SLA (Lyster, 2015). CF is inviting or addressing students to check something they have said either concerning spelling or grammatical accuracy when errors are committed. It is not easy that it seems to be; thus, it is complex process. According to the different studies done on CF, results showed that there is no a certain convention on how to design a feedback or how to measure its effectiveness (Mackey, 2007).

5.2.2. Supportive feedback and/or praises

Using praises, supportive and positive feedback as a reinforcement to students' products may have great influence on students' motivation. Cangelosi (2013) suggested the use of supportive replies by teachers claiming that this strategy helps in building on students' self-confidence. He supported his idea with two examples one with a supportive and other with a non-supportive reply. First, a student said to his teacher, "I can't figure these out! They're just too hard for me", the teacher replies: "they can really be difficult. I see that you're having trouble with these" (p108). This example indicates acceptance to the student's feeling where the teacher has understood that his student is facing difficulties and relieves his frustration with a supportive response. However, in some cases teacher misunderstood the student; for instance, a reply like "these should be a piece of cake for a smart guy like you!"(ibid) is likely to be more 'non-supportive response' in which the teacher did not grasp the difficulty the learner was facing.

5.3. *Modified input and interaction*

5.3.1. Input modifications

In foreign language classroom, it is important for the teacher to simplify and modify speech as much as possible for the sake of achieving the level of students' comprehension. Charles Ferguson has invented the term 'Foreigner Talk' claiming that with foreigners who "had little or no knowledge" about the language itself, we usually use particular kind of input that seems to be more simplified and accessible. The main characteristics of the notion are "modification of grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. The table below summarized the main input modification used in Teacher Talk (Lynch, 1996).

Table 2.1: Input modifications

Type of input modification	Characteristics
Grammar	- Less complex utterances. - More use of the present tense. - Shorter utterances.
Vocabulary	- The use of more common vocabulary. - Using nouns instead of pronouns. - Avoid using idioms.
Pronunciation	- Slower delivery of speech. - More use of long pauses. - Clear articulation. - Using standard forms. -Less vowel reduction and more stress differentiation.
Non-verbal	- Increasing the use of gestures and facial expressions.

Extracted from Lynch, 1996, p. 41.

The extent to which input is modified depends on the learners' level either advanced, intermediate or elementary since it is targeted to non- proficient learners (non-native) and at the same time different from that of proficient speakers (native and advanced). (Markee, 2015). In other words, vocabulary used with native speakers are not like those used with non-natives. An experimental study was done to compare the way in which native and non-native learners receive the same input; non-native learners were from different levels (the example is extracted from Lynch, 1996, p.42):

Example: A teacher was describing hat seller:

Native: 'a weaver'

Advanced: 'a weaver + he used to weave straw hats'

Intermediate: 'a weaver + he made hats and baskets'

Elementary: 'an old man who made hats and sold hats'

Considering the example, the more we move to complex level, the more we encounter new and complex vocabulary. Accordingly, the teacher used different words that can be understood and accessible to the learners, and she used more simple and common words of everyday language in case of non-native learners (Lynch, 1996).

5.3.2. Interaction modification

Lynch (1996) claimed that interaction modifications could be of great help to learners in which it assists their understanding more than input modification. Considering listening activity, in interaction modification there is direct contact and interaction between the interlocutors (teacher and students); whereas, in the latter (input modification) learners only listen to the modified version where there is no real interaction. The main interaction modification are summarized in the table below:

Table 2.2: interaction modifications

Type of interaction modification	*Definition*
Confirmation check	- Making sure that what you have understood is what the learner means.
Comprehension check	- Making sure that the learners have understood what you mean.
Clarification request	- Asking the learners to explain or rephrase.
Repetition	- Repeating your words or those of the learners.
Reformulation	- Rephrasing the content of what you have said.
Completion	- Completing the learners' utterance
Backtracking	- Returning to the point of conversation until you feel that the learners have understood you.

Extracted from Lynch, p.47

Talking about input and interaction modifications separately does not mean that each exists alone in speech; in other words, both types of modification are often used together consider the following example (extracted from Lynch, 1996, p.48):

Example: a teacher telling the monkey story to an elementary-level English learner

T: and he shakes his fist at them up in the tree

S: (frowns)

T: he shakes his fist at them   (*Repetition*)

S: ah ok wait a minute

T: he waves at them, do you understand?   (*Reformulation+comprehension check*)

S: no

T: well he wakes up first of all and um he's angry with the monkeys.   (*Backtracking)*

S: ah yeah

T: because + yes?   (*Double check*)

S: ah yes

T: because they've taken his hats

S: yes

T: and he shakes his fist that is he waves his arm at them   (*Reformulation*)

S : hm

T: in anger

S: yes yes

T: and the monkeys all waves their arms back at him

S: yes

Taking input modification into account, we find that the teacher in the example gives synonyms to uncommon words which are 'shake' and 'fist' and substitutes them with more common words 'wave' and 'arm' orderly.   However, if we consider interaction modifications, the student expresses his/her lack understanding non-verbally using facial expression. The teacher as well use different interaction modification such as reformulation, comprehension check, repetition and backtracking.

5.4. Teacher explanation

Teacher's ability to provide learners with the required explanation neither less nor more than expected is not easy task and may determine his/her teaching efficiency. Calfee (1986) once said, "Good teaching is good explanation" (cited in Odora, 2014, p.71). In other words, in order to make information accessible to students, the teacher has to provide as much as possible knowledge with considering students' levels. Lynch (1996) argued that the teacher needs to develop certain signals, which indicate for the students that teacher is going to explain and/or add information, which means that what is said currently is only continuation to what have been said previously. The following example is extracted from Lynch (1996, p.8).

Example:

   R: people say it's the oldest most haunted restaurant.

   S: haunted?

   R: haunted is when the ghosts come whoo-oo-ooh

   S: (laughs) right

R: right? So…

In this example, teacher is trying to explain the word 'haunted' that seems unfamiliar to the student using sounds whoo-oo-ooh. There is no particular way of explaining; thus, there are many ways of giving explanation such as giving more information, showing pictures, giving examples, definitions…etc and this depends on the situation and the nature of the topic.

5.5. *Student talk*

Student talk is one of the indicators of students participation and involvement in the learning task; however, this does not mean that all students are engaged; still there some who refuse to talk or to take part in learning. There are varied forms of student talk that can be classifies into verbal like reading, confusion… and non-verbal such as silence and gestures. Other forms are listed in the table below.

5.5.1. Giving explanation

Group work is a combination of mixed learners of different levels and abilities. Therefore, activities given in classroom may not suit all learners in which some of them will find a particular task a piece of cake others may not understand it without their partners or teacher's assistance. In cooperative learning, providing assistance is not only teacher's job even students should help each other in order to achieve the task goal. Consider the following examples (extracted from Lynch, 1996, p.7):

Example 1:

M: sorry you said something I didn't catch what I have written down is 'soccer more'?

N: oh sophomore I'm sorry.

M: what is that can you explain?

N: in the universities students joining the first year are freshmen, the second year is sophomore and then junior and senior

M: aha so it means second-year student?

N: yeah

In the above example, N is explaining what his partner M did not grasp (both are students). Therefore, we can determine that the word 'sophomore' is new vocabulary for M and he did not encounter it before.

The next table illustrates aspects of classroom interaction divided into two parts that are Teacher and Student Talks as adapted by Moskowitz.

Table 2.3: Foreign Language Interaction Analysis (FLINT) system adapted from Moskowitz 1971.

Teacher Talk	Direct influence	- Giving information/ explanation - Giving directions - Criticizing students' behaviours/responses - Correcting mistakes without rejection or criticism
	Indirect influence	- Accept feelings. - Praises and encourages. - Using/repeat students' ideas and responses. - Asking questions - Saying jokes
Student Talk		- Students initiating or responding using their own ideas. - Students response: responding to specific and limited task such as reading. - Silence: pause, absence of verbal interaction, or while using audiovisual aids or other material. - Confusion (work oriented): all students talk at once discussing the task and look to be excited. - Confusion (non-work oriented): students talk at once out of the task, and not following directions. - Laughter - The use of native language by both teacher and students. - Nonverbal: communicating using gestures, facial expressions and body language.

Extracted from in Douglas, 2000, p.170.

To sum, teacher should improve student amount of talk by being aware of the different factors that may demotivate or affect students' participation and try to overcome them by encouraging interaction and making errors because the more students commit errors the more they learn. It is important as well for students to collaborate with their mentor for achieving better results.

5.6. Turn-allocation and turn-taking behaviour

How teacher could manage turns is crucial issue in EFL classrooms, as well as how s/he moves smoothly from one interactive activity to another. Usually, teacher gives more chance to intelligent students or those who raised their hands first to participate; this behaviour done by teachers is called 'turn allocation' i.e. choosing who speaks or who is going to take the turn. In fact, this act is time constrained, which means that in order to save time teacher prefers to allocate turns to volunteers rather than passive or silent students. Therefore, teacher should make the classroom more active by letting all students participate. (Tsui, 1995 cited in Quenan, 2014).

6. The importance of interaction

Rivers (1987) emphasized the importance of interaction in any classroom as one condition of learning. She believed that interaction is not just producing a set of connected speech, but it is also the ability of understanding others' messages and vice versa. Moreover, when students use language to interact in cooperative activities (pair or group works), it is an indication of learners' engagement in the task. In the process of interaction, students may use their receptive skills i.e. listening to others or reading authentic materials that allow them to develop their language input. Students are not asked to invent new words; therefore, their role is to connect their background knowledge to what they are learning.

6.1. How does interaction create opportunities for learning?

In Second Language Acquisition (SLA), interaction between learners is important for enhancing the target language (TL). Through the act of negotiation for meaning, students will be able to receive and produce speech (input and output), comments or feedback (Feldman, 2007). Classroom interaction has two main functions. The first is improving and developing social relationships that is known as 'social function', and the second is 'ideational function' i.e. providing space where teacher and students can talk and open classroom discourse (Dippold, 2015).) Furthermore, experiencing and working in groups maximizes the chance of learners' talk also it "reduces the psychological burden of public performance"(Lynch, 1996 .p.110). This means that the more students talk, negotiate and ask questions, the more stress of talking in front of their partners or people decreases.

Sometimes students fail to produce or interpret messages that lead to blocks in the act of communication. In order to avoid and overcome breakdowns of communication that usually occurs between native and non-native speakers, Long (1983) set several interactional

modifications such as repetition, clarification requests, rewording…etc. Later, Pica (1996) and Gass (1997) as well claimed that through these strategies that are used during interaction, learners will be more attentive and have time to decode meaning of the speech. Furthermore, it has been also pointed out, "Negotiation can help learners to notice mismatches between the input and their own interlanguage-an initial step in L_2 development." (Cited in Mackey, 2007, p.13). In other way, native and target languages differ concerning grammatical rules; accordingly, learners cannot generalize or use the same rules as those in the mother tongue (MT); thus through practice, they will recognize the differences and deduce new rules. Mackey added later that the speaker could ask for more explanation when something is not clear, so that the interlocutor will repeat and simplify as much as possible to make the speech more comprehensible or achieve the listener's level of understanding (ibid).

7. Factors that hinder classroom and group interaction

Group work should be organized and members should behave in a way that makes the group successful. This can be achieved only if the members determine or being able to identify the factors which may hinder the group performance and work to avoid them. The major challenges that may impede the process of interaction within the group are *student passivity and disengagement, anxiety, lack of supportive norms, gender influence and classroom organization.*

7.1. Student passivity and disengagement

One of the serious and widely spread factors, which hinders learning and teaching the foreign language; thus creates a challenge for teachers all over the world is Students' passivity or student disengagement. It is a result of poor or limit interaction between the teacher and students especially when the teacher overuses recitation which takes the form of 'teacher's closed-questions' and requires brief answers from students and providing low-level of feedback or evaluation (Hardman, 2016). A study carried out in 2011 at Tungnan University-Taiwan to identify major factors that prevent Taiwanese students from participating using more than two data collection methods. Results showed that learners' reticence (silence/ passivity) can be related to one of the following factors: "the fear of losing face, the fear of showing off, the teachers' intolerance of silence, and the insufficient wait-time".(Chang, 2011, p.1).

Furthermore, mentors found themselves explaining the lessons over and over without any kind of response which indicated that students have understood or not; as a result, there was a clear absence of learners' creativity and critical thinking. Arnason et.all (2017) reported that passive or silent students are those who do not participate except when they are asked to, and that in many classes, this type of students represents the majority. They described them more saying that "they do not contribute to online forums or group work, but still submitting their assignments on time and clearly learning despite their low social profile"(Arnason et.all, 2017, p.12). This means that despite they are passive or silent this does not mean that they have no desire to learn since they follow direction and brought their assignment on due time.

7.2. Anxiety

In EFL classes, learners could be anxious, shy, nervous, or frustrated about participating in certain exercises. Consequently, these reactions may affect their academic achievement and/or performance, which is called 'Academic anxiety'; therefore, teacher's role is to identify this type of anxiety and try to overcome it to improve students' performance before it increases or becomes uncontrolled. (Huberty, 2012 cited in Hooda & Saini, 2017). Besides, there is another type of anxiety where students cannot ask for others' help and do not feel at ease when working with groups that is known as 'social anxiety'. American Psychiatric Association (2013) described this type of anxiety as the excessive fear of speaking or performing in front of others because of being rejected i.e. the absence of one of Maslow's human needs (the sense of belonging and acceptance). (Cited in Warner, Colognori & Lynch, 2018). In 2009 at Bangkok University, a study on the impact of cooperative learning on EFL students' anxiety, this investigation involved 40 students using the standardized Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale, semi-structured interview and tests. The findings showed positive outcomes; in other words, implementing cooperative learning helped in reducing the level of students' anxiety (Wichadee, 2010).

7.3. Lack of supportive norms

Mackey (2006) stated that positive feedback and/or supportive comments that students receive concerning their performance is a source of interactional positive outcome. In other words, when students work with others without any kind of support or encouragement from both teacher and their teammates, they can be frustrated or think that they are less valuable in the group. Moreover, some students like to criticize their partners; they keep on criticizing without any constructive feedback that may affect the way others are working. Therefore,

feedback is needed in any group work in which it motivates students to interact more and to be active participants.

7.4. Gender influence

Generally in classrooms, there are certain modules where females are better than males and vice versa (such as mathematics and physics); thus, they perform differently. Lindow, Marrett and Wilkinson (1985) claimed that this difference between the two genders maybe associated to 'interactional experienced'. Moreover, different studies examine the effects of gender on learners' interaction among them Gass's and Varonis's study (1986) which has shown that interaction is more active in mixed gender than in matched-gender (male-male or female-female). Usually males are likely to be the dominants of the conversation; they are better than girls regarding amount and performance of speech (cited in Feldman, 2007). Besides, male students are more likely to improve autonomous skills outside and inside classroom compared with girls because they prefer to work independently in particular tasks and succeed in them especially when these tasks are related to problem solving. (Lindow et al., 1985). Despite what Gass and Varonis believed in, we may find in some cases, some students do not feel at ease when being grouped with students of other gender; this latter can be related shyness and lack of confidence factors.

7.5. Classroom organization

Another Influential factor in the process of learning is classroom organization. In fact, students spent the third of the day at school (maximum seven hours); therefore, the classroom should be a place where students feel relaxed, and which allows them to concentrate and receive knowledge. This latter can be affected when the physical setting is inappropriate for learning or does not help students to concentrate. In addition, classroom organization includes seating arrangement, classroom activities, teaching strategies, and the size of the classroom. Doyle (2005) claimed that activities are the core of the classroom organization and that management is associated to the type of activity being used. In other words, the type of activity determines teacher' and students' amount of talk, time needed for giving directions, setting guidelines (length and sequence of the activity), organizing students and controlling their behaviours (both disruptive and inappropriate). Therefore, teacher needs to manage all of these elements; otherwise, classroom will be unorganized and a kind of mess.

To sum, the above-mentioned factors are only some of them; other factors may include insufficient wait-time (shortage of time), poor academic background of students, poor communication skills and language proficiency, lack of preparation…etc. Teachers should be aware of all these factors and try to overcome them.

8. Promoting interaction

Teacher-centered cannot be at all an interactive setting since the teacher there is the one who directs and dominates the classroom (Rivers, 1987); therefore, interaction should be two-ways and more, not one-way. In other sense, there should be some communication between the teacher and students and among students themselves. Some teachers seem to refuse to use interactive and cooperative activities simply because they are chaotic; beside, some students as well may not accept to work with others because they do not feel at ease when they talk and share their opinions. This problem can be due to the topic or the activity itself, which means that if the topic is not interesting, students will not find what to talk about. Moreover, another reason is the lack of practice and experience on how to work and interact with others, this is why in many cases we find students know the knowledge but they fail in expressing them to their partners. In brief, absence of interaction in classroom will create a quiet setting with anxious students who cannot express themselves. Therefore, it is important to improve and foster interaction through well preparation of the interactive session. First, teacher need to providing more enthusiastic environment by varying the types of activities, teaching materials and using new techniques. Second, establishing the desire to talk and share ideas through the use of open questions which make students talk and start discussing. Furthermore, teacher should establish a good relationship and trust among learners through 'ice breaking activities' that make students break the barriers between them and their partners and reduce social anxiety. It is important to accept students' feeling, opinions and being more tolerant ignoring some errors because correcting students while they are communicating may demotivate them.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have defined the concept of interaction and mentioned its history; then we have introduced its two main types (teacher-student and student-student interaction) with examples. We discussed the role and importance of interaction in EFL classrooms in which it plays a great role in facilitating learning and language development. As a result, students become more powerful and active when they work in groups where they do not feel that they are controlled by teacher most of the time except when the teacher moving around checking students' work and providing them with feedback. As well as, it helps them to be more socialized through sharing their ideas with students of different levels, different learning styles and different abilities. In addition, we have mentioned the major factors that may hinder group interaction such as anxiety and students passivity; these factors affect the group harmony and create barriers between the members. Finally, we have concluded with how to promote classroom interaction by varying the strategies in order to motivate students to talk and be active learners.

The Field Work

Analysis of classroom observation, teachers' and students' questionnaires

Field Work

Analysis of classroom observation, teachers' and students' questionnaires

Introduction

The core of this study is to investigate the role of group work in enhancing classroom interaction. This chapter is devoted for data collection and analysis; first, it provides some background about the methodology (sample, population and the research design). Then it analyzes and discusses the data obtained from classroom observation and questionnaire (both teachers' and students' questionnaires) which are selected to confirm or reject the hypothesis and answer the research questions.

1. Research Methodology

1.1. Research approach and design

According to Dörnyei (2007), there are three major research approaches that are quantitative, qualitative, and mixed method approaches. In this study, we have based on mixed method as the appropriate way in order to describe the social phenomena as they occur naturally without any attempts to manipulate the situation under study. The data obtained from the classroom observation and the questionnaires are set of qualitative (non-numerical /words) and quantitative data that may display the role of group work in raising interaction in EFL classrooms.

1.2. Population and sample

The population surveyed consists of two (2) classes of second year students, scientific stream at Habba Abd El Madjid secondary school in El Meghaier. The total number of students is about 59 students; population is chosen based on *convenience sampling technique* (non-probability) because students were easy accessed and already acquainted with group work and cooperative learning activities. Our sample is one class of 31 students (among them 7 boys and 24 girls) that was chosen randomly, the class is divided on 6 groups each group involves 5-6 students.

1.3. Data collection tools

1.3.1. Classroom observation

Classroom observation is one of the data collection methods that allow us to observe the situation in natural setting and gather live data.

1.3.1.1. Objectives

We opt for using observation as the data collection tool since we are dealing with interaction that involves students' behaviours. This tool may help us in observing how the process of interaction occurs in classroom between a teacher and his students and among student themselves when they are engaged in group work tasks. In addition, it provides general insight about the students' attitudes toward group work and its effects on classroom interaction.

1.3.1.2. Description and structure of the observation checklist

Classroom observation helps us to observe students in natural setting using interaction checklist to facilitate note taking. The checklist was influenced from variety of checklists. As we have mention before, the class is divided into 6 main groups, each group involves 5 students (one group with 6). In each observation session, we sat with two groups and observe them for 20-25min. It took us six (6) observation sessions in order to observe each group twice. Considering time and activity factors, we observe each group in different times of the day (in the morning and in the afternoon) and in different activities to make sure that these factors do not affect students learning. The groups remain the same i.e. members do not change. They are divided based on a diagnostic test done on the beginning of the year where each group have to include at least one smart student and one or two slow students.

The checklist is made of 4 (four) sections, the first section 'teacher's behaviour and interaction with students' includes six (6) items, which are focused more on the part of teacher's behaviour and interaction with students including: the tone, his role in motivating students to talk, giving them directions, checking their answers and providing feedback. The second section 'group management and teaching strategies' involves 3 items focus on how teacher manages the group work and whether he/she is varying teaching strategies, tools, and activities, whether he uses the time efficiently and set guidelines about the length and the sequence of the activity? However, section (c) is about general observation of each group as one unit (it includes 4 items), how they handle interaction, the tone of their speeches, their understanding in addition to periods silence and confusion. Finally, the last section 'student-

student interaction and individual behaviours' that is used to observe student-student interaction in addition to individual behaviours since students do not behave or interact in the same way. This part involves nine (9) elements among them 4 interactive elements (a, b, c and d) and 5 elements that hinder interaction (e, f, g, h and i).

1.3.1.3.Analysis of the classroom observation

Section A: Teacher's behaviour and interaction with students.

In the first two sections of the observation checklist (section A and B), we have used frequencies and percentages (frequency x 100) and that were summarized in tables.

Item one: Encouraging students to participate

<div align="center">

Table 3.1: Teacher's role as prompter

</div>

	Yes	No	Not sure
Frequency	6	0	0
Percentage	100%	0	0

During the observation sessions that we have attended, we noticed that teacher was always trying to motivate students to participate and share their ideas. For instance, in 'the presentation stage' where the teacher introduced the new unit 'No man is an island', she drew on the board and encouraged them to figure out the title of the new unit through identifying the meaning of drawings. When students found some difficulties, she helped them by giving hints; moreover, the teacher used words such as "what else" to encourage students to think more and give additional ideas.

In the fourth session where the task was ordering paragraphs, the teacher made the task more motivating by creating kind of challenge or competition among the groups using scores; in other way, the group who got the correct order would get a full score or being praised. Furthermore, another way of motivation that the teacher has used is 'time reminder'; reminding students about time made them hurry to finish their work even if it was full of mistakes. Besides, in 'asking yes/no question'task; the teacher gave each group three (3) chances to correct their mistakes and errors (spelling, grammatical errors…etc).

Sometimes students refused to participate or wrote on the board. This might be because of the fear of making mistakes, shyness and the lack of confidence; even though, the teacher asked them to try because they were there to learn from their mistakes.

Item two: Reinforcing correct responses/ performance

Table 3.2: Reinforcing correct responses

	Yes	No	Not sure
Frequency	4	0	2
Percentage	67%	0	33%

Based on what we have observed, the teacher often reinforced students' performances and correct responses using constructive feedback (positive feedback) i.e. teacher used affirming comments when students answered correctly such as "Good", "Well done", "Excellent". Such kind of feedback could motivate students, raises their confidence, makes them feel that they are valuable, and may encourage them to do more next time. Additionally, the teacher used students' ideas from time to time, repeated them or wrote them as an example in the board which is another significant way to strengthening students' performance. Not sure in here means that the observer were not attentive or did not notice the item in two sessions.

Item three: Giving directions/instructions, restating questions when necessary

Table 3.3: Giving directions, restating questions

	Yes	No	Not sure
Frequency	5	0	1
Percentage	83%	0	17%

Teacher usually gave instructions when he wanted to explain the activity or make transition from one activity to another. First, the teacher asked the students to form groups when entering the class, then after explaining the lesson in short introduction, she introduced the activity using as clear and simple language as possible. After that, the teacher told students what they were supposed to do and sometimes set guidelines (i.e. the sequence and length of the activity) before starting the practice stage or the group work.

Teacher never gave the answer directly to students thus she kept explaining and giving hints until they figured out the right answer even if it was in Arabic. However, she restated questions by repeating or paraphrasing when she felt that students did not understand because they rarely when ask for more explanation or clarification.

Item four: Using Clear voice and checking students' understanding and group works

Table 3.4: Teacher's voice and checking understanding

	Yes	No	Not sure
Frequency	6	0	0
Percentage	100%	0	0

During our observation, teacher used a normal audible voice that could be understood by those who were attentive; moreover, from time to time she used a new vocabulary that students ignored its meaning and explained them by a definition or providing examples when needed. The teacher checked students' understanding using "*Is it ok?", "Is it clear?", "shall I repeat?"*. Besides, she kept on moving around the groups to see their progress, read what they wrote, listened to their discussion and gave them feedback by asking them to correct spelling mistakes, revise and check their answers, or to rewrite again when necessary. Turning around groups is crucial step because some groups when they do not understand something, they feel afraid and frustrated to call for teacher's help or requesting more clarification; therefore, they wait until the teacher comes over their group to ask her.

Item five: Establishing a climate of trust and teamwork by being fair and friendly.

Table 3.5: Establishing climate of trust and teamwork

	Yes	No	Not sure
Frequency	5	1	0
percentage	83%	17%	0

What got our attention during observations is that teacher kept smiling almost of time and sometimes has sense of humor; consequently, students were motivated and engaged with what their teacher was saying. Teacher often trying to establish the climate of teamwork and trust by encouraging students to work as one group, discuss the activity together and being fair through giving the groups equal chances to say their answers and wrote them on the board. Furthermore, using competitions between the groups could create positive interdependence among the group where each student feel the responsibility as group member in which success or failure of the group depends on the cooperation of all members.

Item six: Inappropriate behaviours are dealt with.

Table 3.6: Teacher's control of students' behaviours

	Yes	No	Not sure
Frequency	6	0	0
Percentage	100%	0%	0%

Handling bad or inappropriate behaviours is one of the challenging issues in classroom management. Through our observations, teacher dealt with inappropriate behaviours without any kind of punishment or negative feedback that could demotivate students, affect their learning or makes them hate the session. She handled students' behaviours by asking them to focus on the activity or she will give them low marks; otherwise, teacher ignored misbehaviours by moving around and being close to those students.

Summary of section A results

Table 3.7: summary of teacher behaviour and interaction

Items	one	two	three	four	five	six	Total percentage
Yes	100%	67%	83%	100%	83%	100%	88.8%
No	0	0	0	0	17%	0	2.8%
Not sure	0	33%	17%	0	0	0	8.3%

As the table shows, we sum the percentages of the 6 items divided by total number of items. The results reveals that teacher's behaviour and interaction with students represented 89%.

Section B: Classroom management and teaching strategies

Item one: variety of activities are used

Table 3.8: teacher's use of varied activities

	Yes	No	Not sure
Frequency	6	0	0
percentage	100%	0	0

Teacher was always varying the type of activities; often she used more than one activity in one session. Some activities that have been used are writing letters, reading, ordering sentences/paragraphs, fill in the blanks, guessing the words or meaning of drawings, describing pictures, asking yes/no questions, listing items on a table…etc

Item two: variety of teaching aids are used

Table 3.9: Teacher's use of different teaching aids

	Yes	No	Not sure
Frequency	0	6	0
Percentage	0	100%	0

The teacher never used ICT tools or varied the teaching aids when setting for groups such as videos, audios…etc ; however, the main tool that teacher relied on and used it effectively was the 'Whiteboard'. Teacher used it for drawings and asked students to guess their meanings, hanging pictures to be described, drawing schemes like drawing the word 'charity' in the middle asked students to write some examples of charities.

Item three: Did the teacher use time efficiently?

Table 3.10: Teacher's effective use of time

	Yes	No	Not sure
Frequency	4	2	0
Percentage	67%	33%	0

Sometime teacher used the time effectively where she gave 5-15 min for presentation stage i.e. introducing and explaining the lesson. However, the majority of time was given to practice and production stages, which depend on the type and the number of activities teacher decided to do; for example, if the activities were short and simple like 'fill in the blanks', 'ordering paragraphs or sentences', asking yes/no question, teacher gave 5-10 min for each activity. For tasks that need long time such as witting letter, teacher considered this and gave more time. During two sessions, we believe the teacher did not manage time effectively because in one session the groups did not finish writing their paragraphs, and in another students did not have sufficient to write their lesson.

Summary of section B results

Table 3.11: Teacher's management to groups

Items	one	two	three	Total percentage
Yes	100%	0	67%	56%
No	0	100%	33%	44%
Not sure	0	0	0	0

The table 3.11 summarizes the total percentage of classroom or the groups' management. During the 6th session that we have attended and based on the 3 selected items, we found that the classroom was managed by 56%.

Section C: General observation of the group interaction

In this section, we used rating scale to determine how much each item occurs in both observation sessions of the 6th groups.

Item one: Give each other chance to speak

Table 3.12: Students' respect to others when they talk

Group n°	Group **1**		Group **2**		Group **3**		Group **4**		Group **5**		Group **6**	
Session n°	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Most of time					√	√						
Sometimes		√		√			√	√	√	√	√	√
Rarely	√		√									

S n°1: in the afternoon   S n°2: in the morning

As the table above summarizes, the results of whether students gave each other chance to speak or not, we have noticed that both groups 1 and 2 in their first observation rarely when gave each other chance to speak i.e. they were talking at the same time; however, in the second observation they sometimes when allowed each others to talk. Group 3 in the two observation sessions that we have attended with, they were always giving each other opportunity to speak, they did not interrupt any of their teammate's speech and they discuss the tasks by listening to different ideas. Whereas, groups 4, 5 and 6 during the two sessions they were sometimes giving the chance to all group mates to express ideas or provide helpful suggestions.

Item two: Figure thing out without teacher's assistance.

Table 3.13: Groups' ability in figuring things without teacher's help

Group n°	Group **1**		Group **2**		Group **3**		Group **4**		Group **5**		Group **6**	
Session n°	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Most of time	√	√		√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Sometimes			√									
Rarely												

In both observation sessions, the majority of groups were always figuring thing out without teacher's assistance except for group 2 that in the second session was sometimes

when figures things i.e. they had some difficulties which later on were solved. The groups tried to discuss their task without calling for teacher's help and if someone did not understand a point, s/he asked her/his teammate first. Each group members were more responsible, relied on themselves and worked as one unit; therefore, the sense of positive interdependence was clearly established in almost all the groups.

Item three: Use quiet voices in their communication

Table 3.14: Students' extent use of quiet voice in interaction

Group n°	Group **1**		Group **2**		Group **3**		Group **4**		Group **5**		Group **6**	
Session n°	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Most of time					√	√			√	√	√	√
Sometimes	√	√	√	√			√	√				
Rarely												

The table above shows the results of how much students were using quiet voices in their communication. We have found that groups 3, 5 and 6 were most of time using quiet voices when discuss the task or talk to their partners; however, groups 1, 2 and 4 were sometimes talking using quiet voices; therefore, they were noisy to some extent. In fact, using quiet voice when interacting could be helpful to some group members in order to focus and come up with new ideas because not all students can learn or focus in noise.

Item four: Period of confusion and silence

Table 3.15: Groups' period of confusion and silence

Group n°	Group **1**		Group **2**		Group **3**		Group **4**		Group **5**		Group **6**	
Session n°	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Most of time					√							
Sometimes						√					√	
Rarely	√		√					√	√			
Never		√		√			√			√		√

As the table illustrates the period of confusion and silence in each group**.** We have seen that in the first observation of both groups 1and 2, students rarely when confused or kept silent; besides, in their second observation, there was not any confusion or silence in the two groups. In the first session with group 3, they were silent most of time it could be due to the researcher herself where they felt anxious or because of some difficulties concerning the task; in the next session, they were sometimes confused or making pauses. Moreover, the first session with group 4 and the second sessions with group 5 and 6 there

was complete absence of any kind of confusion or silence in which students were talking and discussing the task very normal; whereas, in the second observation to group 4 and the first observation to group 5, students were rarely confused or silent. Additionally, with group six it was different, they were sometimes when make pauses or seem to be confused.

Summary of section C results

Concerning the 4 items that we have based on in general observation of the groups, we found that each group has different way of interaction in terms of using quiet voices and giving each other chance to speak. In item 2, we have seen that the majority of groups tried to figure out things or rely on themselves most of time to solve their activity without their teacher's assistance. As we can deduce that time factor did not affect the first three items; however, in item 4 we have seen that the majority of groups show progress in the second session (the morning sessions) compared with the afternoon sessions. For instance, group 1,2 and 5 in the afternoon session were rarely confused and silent; whereas, in the morning session they did not show any confusion or silence.

Section D: Student-student interaction and individual behaviurs

In this section, we have count percentages of interactive and hindering interaction items in each session, then we have sum the percentages of the 2 observation sessions divided by 2 to get total percentage of each item.

Group One

Table 3.16: Group one interaction and behaviours

interactive Items	Percentage	Hinder interaction items	Percentage
a- Focus on task	50%	e- Difficulty in understanding	10%
b- keep the group on task	40%	f- Lack of concentration	30%
c- Asking questions to partners	40%	g- Rejecting others' ideas	0
d- Offering opinions/suggestions	50%	h- Talkative members	30%
	/	i- Silent group members	20%
Total	45%	Total	18%

Based on the two (2) sessions that we have attended with group one, we find that 50% of the group students were almost always listening and following directions, others 40% were trying to keep the group on task and participate on discussion. In addition to 40% of

students asked clarifying questions to their partners before getting teacher's assistance; besides, 50% offered opinions and helpful suggestions and supported group decisions. However, there were some factors that hindered interaction; for instance, 10% of students were having difficulties in understanding directions; whereas, 30% of students were rarely when listen or focus on the task. Additionally, 30% of students were talkative and another 20% were silent.

Group two

Table 3.17: Group two interaction and behaviours

interactive Items	Percentage	Hinder interaction items	Percentage
a- Focus on task	44.4%	e- Difficulty in understanding	11.1%
b- keep the group on task	22.2%	f- Lack of concentration	44.4%
c- Asking questions to partners	11.1%	g- Rejecting others' ideas	22.2%%
d- Offering opinions/suggestions	33.3%	h- Talkative members	11.1%%
	/	i- Silent group members	22.2%
Total	27.7%	Total	22.2%

For the second group, 44% of students were always focusing on the task, 22% of them were trying to motivate other members and keep them focusing on the activity. However, 11% of the group members asked clarifying questions to their partners when they did not understand a question or activity direction; some others 33% provided the group with ideas and suggestions. Some factors that hindered interaction were observed as well in which 11% of students had difficulty in understanding the direction. Additionally, 44% of students were rarely when focus on the task and 22% members seemed to be not accepting others' ideas and group decision. 11% represented talkative students; whereas, 22% was the percentage of silent members in the group.

Group three

Table 3.18: Group three interaction and behaviours

interactive Items	Percentage	Hinder interaction items	Percentage
a- Focus on task	50%	e- Difficulty in understanding	0%
b- keep the group on task	10%	f- Lack of concentration	20%
c- Asking questions to partners	30%	g- Rejecting others' ideas	0%
d- Offering opinions/suggestions	40%	h- Talkative members	20%
	/	i- Silent group members	10%
Total	32.5%	Total	10%

In this group, 50% students were almost focusing and following the activity and directions and only few students (10%) were trying to encourage their partners and keep them focusing on the task. 30% of students asked their partners to explain what they did not understand without calling for teacher's help. Besides, 40% of students offered opinions and suggestions to the group; whereas, 20% of the group members rarely when listened or focused on the task. Some others 20% were talkative in which they kept on talking while their partners were discussing the task; in the opposite, 10% of students were silent most of the time, they did not seem to be interested or had a desire to work and make contributions.

Group four

Table 3.19: Group four interaction and behaviours

Interactive Items	Percentage	Hinder interaction items	Percentage
a- Focus on task	100%	e- Difficulty in understanding	14.2%
b- keep the group on task	71.4%	f- Lack of concentration	0%
c- Asking questions to partners	28.5%	g- Rejecting others' ideas	0%
d- Offering opinions/suggestions	42.8%	h- Talkative members	0%
	/	i- Silent group members	0%
Total	60.6%	Total	2.8%

In the fourth group, all members were focusing on the task and following what was asked by their teacher. The majority 71% of them were trying to motivate each other and participate in the group discussion. Few students 29% asked for more explanation from their teammates before getting teacher's assistance. In addition to 43% provided opinions and suggestions that could be helpful in solving the task. Only 14% of students were having difficulties in understanding instruction.

Group five

<p align="center">**Table 3.20:** Group five interaction and behaviours</p>

interactive Items	Percentage	Hinder interaction items	Percentage
a- Focus on task	100%	e- Difficulty in understanding	0%
b- keep the group on task	40%	f- Lack of concentration	0%
c- Asking questions to partners	20%	g- Rejecting others' ideas	0%
d- Offering opinions/suggestions	60%	h- Talkative members	0%
	/	i- Silent group members	10%
Total	55%	Total	2%

Members of the fifth group were always listening and focusing on their tasks among them 40% students were trying to keep the group involved in group discussion and interaction and 20% of students asked clarifying questions to their partners where they provided feedback and exchanged information. Besides, the majority of group members (60%) offered opinion and support the group decision; despite that, only 10% of the group members were silent most of time.

Group six

<p align="center">**Table 3.21:** Group six interaction and behaviours</p>

Interactive Items	Percentage	Hinder interaction items	Percentage
a- Focus on task	100%	e- Difficulty in understanding	0%
b- keep the group on task	11.1%	f- Lack of concentration	0%
c- Asking questions to partners	22.2%	g- Rejecting others' ideas	0%
d- Offering opinions/suggestions	44.4%	h- Talkative members	0%
	/	i- Silent group members	11.1%
Total	44.4%	Total	2.2%

The last group in our observations, students of that group were always engaged on task and following direction. However, very few students (11%) tried to keep the group focused because they were already engaged, so they did not need to be motivated by others. 22% of students asked questions when they find some difficulties ; additionally, 44% of students were helpful in providing the group with their ideas and suggestion. Whereas, 11% were a talkative members which could affect the group discussion and another 11% were silent most of time.

Summary of total groups' interaction

Table 3.22: Groups' interaction

Items Groups	G1	G2	G3	G4	G5	G6	Total
Interactive	45%	27.7%	32.5%	60.6%	55%	44.4%	44%
Hindering interaction	18%	22.2%	10%	2.8%	2%	2.2%	10%

As the table demonstrates and regarding the items that we have selected; we have sum the percentages of both interactive and hindering interaction items of the sixth groups, then we divided them by the number of groups to get the total percentage of groups' or student-student interaction. The results showed that the groups were interactive to some extent (44%) that represents the half of students/ groups; however, concerning the percentage of the items that hinder interaction was only 10%.

1.3.1.4.Discussion of classroom observation findings

From the results obtained from classroom observation, we have found that teacher-students interaction was improved. The teacher was always trying to motivate her students to participate using different activities and strategies; for example, teacher's sense of humor (keeping on smiling), being fair with students where she gave equal chances to participate. Additionally, the teacher checked the groups' progress and provided them with the necessary feedback. Despite that, one factor that hinders teacher-student interaction was anxiety and fear of making mistakes in which some students were afraid to raise their hands and ask teacher for more explanations; therefore, when they find difficult in understanding, they ask their teammates to explain for them in which they provide them with feedback using an example, synonym or short definition. Not understanding instruction could be interpreted in two different ways, the first is either students were not concentrated so that they could not grasp what teacher said, or due to unclear and ambiguous instruction.

Through our observations, we revealed that the majority of students lack vocabulary, they sometimes translated from Arabic to English, and there was French influence on students' pronunciation. Others found difficulties in understanding instruction or the teacher's direction; some intelligent students seemed to be talkative members and few silent students had no desire to share their ideas or talk; however, teacher sometimes tried to make them involved by asking them to read correct answer, write on the board …etc.

Approximately, in each group, there was one smart student, one or two silent, and others of medium levels. This latter means that teacher tried to create balance between the groups by mixing the abilities and skills of students based on a diagnostic test. The most interactive groups were group 4 and 5 with less hindering interaction items; for instance, there were no talkative members, no rejection of others' ideas. However, positive interdependence was clear in almost all groups where students accept their teammates ideas and group decision, they were satisfied of their group results, and did not complain about any question or decision.

1.3.2. Students' questionnaire

Dörnyei (2007) claimed that questionnaire is one of the main data collection methods, which is series of written questions given to respondents in order to gain some facts, opinions or their attitudes toward a particular situation, strategy…etc. There are three types of questionnaire: structures (closed-ended), unstructured (open-ended), or semi-structured (mixed) questionnaires.

1.3.2.1. Objectives

We opt for using closed-ended or structured questionnaire; it is set of closed ended questions i.e. mixed of yes/no questions, multiple choices, rating scale and Likert scale questions that can be easy fulfilled with taking account to students' level we have used simple vocabulary. Through this method, we aim to determine students' attitudes toward the use of group work in addition to identifying the major factors that hinder their interaction and affect their learning.

1.3.2.2. Description and structure of the main questionnaire

The questionnaire is divided into two main sections; the first is about the role of group work activities in EFL classrooms. This section is subdivided into five (5) main questions; they are centered on identifying students' attitudes toward group work and the main factors that may prevent group interaction. The second section concerned with classroom interaction includes 6 questions; they aim to determine students' awareness of interaction and their amount of talk within groups. The questionnaire was distributed to thirty-one (n31) students of second year-scientific stream at Habba Abd El Madjid secondary school the total population of fifty-nine (N59).

1.3.2.3. Piloting the questionnaire

The aim of the piloting stage is to identify any difficulty in questions that students did not understood before administering it to the whole target sample; therefore, we have selected 4 students to answer the piloted questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of 14 questions divided into two sections, each section compose 7 questions. (**Appendix 2).**

After conducting the piloting stage, we have made some editions in which questions 3 and 4 in the first section were combined in one question since both concerned with the challenges that face students and which hinder them from interaction. In addition, questions 5 and 6 in the same section and that are related to roles of students in group were removed because students were confused because their teacher did not used to assign roles for group member before. Students claimed that the questionnaire was somewhat long; whereas, the left questions were understood and the layout (the font and the structure of questions…) was clear and organized.

1.3.2.4. Administering the questionnaire

The questionnaire was administered to 31 second year secondary school students on 21st April 2019 (four days after conducting the piloting stage) in their English session where all students were present; students took no more than fifteen minutes answering the questions.

1.3.2.5. Analysis of students' questionnaire

Concerning data analysis, we have used percentages summarized and displayed in graphs and pie charts.

Section one: The role of group work activities

Question 1: Do you enjoy working in group?

a- Yes
b- No

Graph 1: Students' attitude toward the use of group work
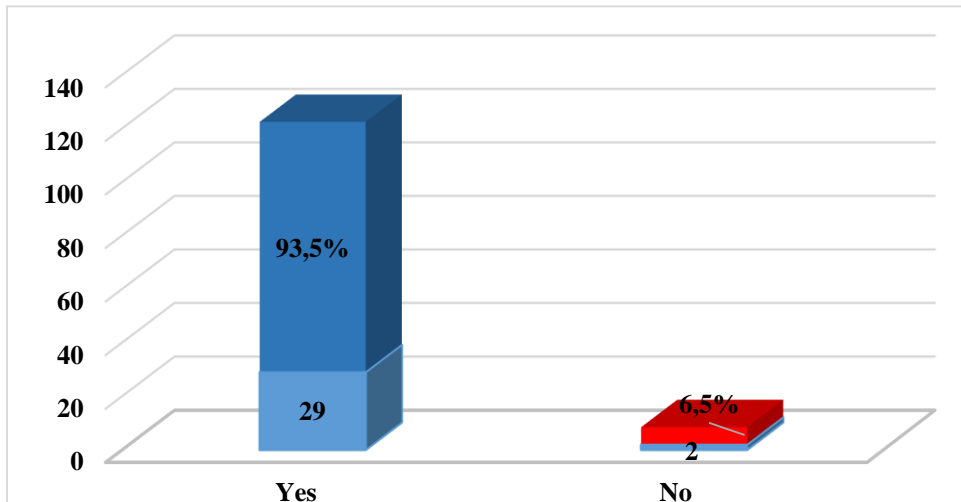
In order to determine students' attitudes toward group work, we have asked whether they enjoy working in groups. As the results show, the majority of students 29 (93.5%) claimed that they enjoyed groups i.e. they had positive attitudes toward working with others; whereas, only two students replied with 'no' that represents (6.5%) which means that they did not enjoy working with others.

Question 2: Do you work in groups in other modules?

  a- Yes

  b- No

Graph 2: Students' experiences to group work in other modules
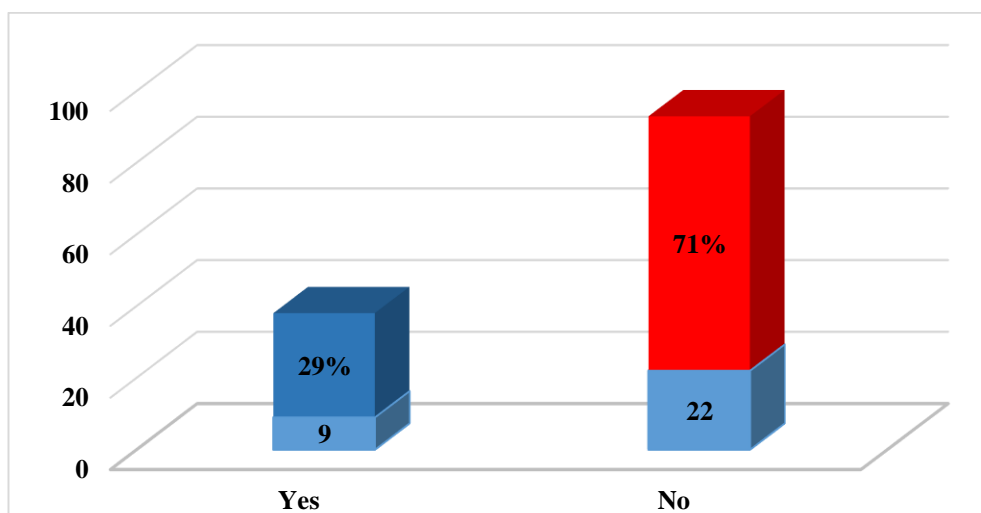
In the second question, 22 (71%) of the students respond that they did not work in groups in other modules; however, 9 (29%) of them claimed that they have experienced group work before in other modules. Experiencing group work in different modules may

help students to be more aware about this strategy, and to gain group skills such as managing time, problem-solving, critical thinking…etc.

Question 3: Do you face any difficulties that may hinder you from participating in-group work activities?

   a- Yes

   b- No

Graph 3: Students' perception to difficulties hindering group interaction.
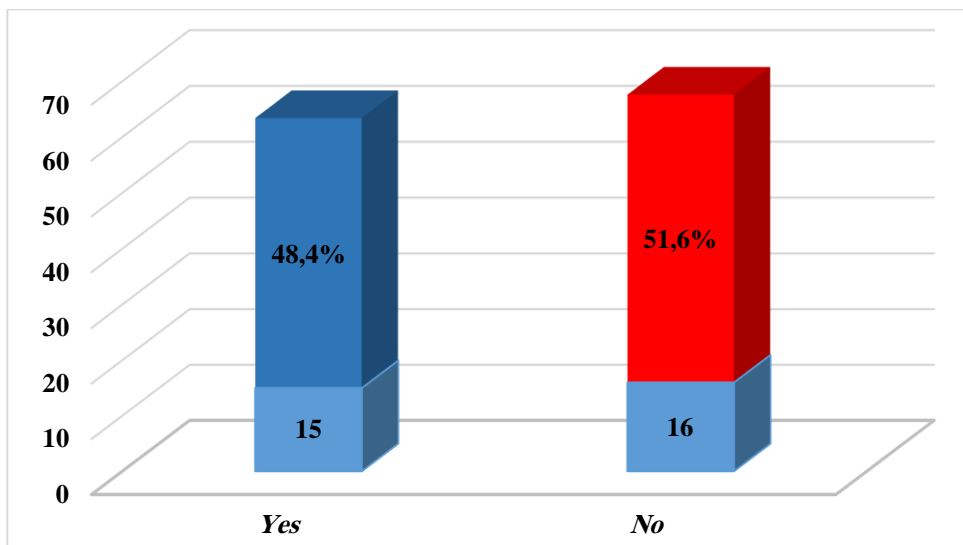
The present question tends to determine whether students facing difficulties when interacting with others. As the graph above illustrates, the half of students 16 (51%) did not face any difficulties when working in groups and the left 15 students (48.4%) argued that they did face some obstacles when talking to or working with a group; some of these difficulties are illustrated in the following sub-question:

If 'yes', what are these difficulties? You may choose more than one

   a- Lack of confidence and/or Shyness

   b- Lack of preparation

   c- Gender (do not feel free when working with the other sex)

   d- Competitions among members.

   e- Lack of time

   f- Lack of vocabulary

   g- No harmony among the group

   h- Others

Table 3.23: Some difficulties that may hinder group participation

Difficulties hinder group interaction	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of confidence and shyness	1	3%
Lack of preparation	3	10%
Gender	5	17%
Competitions among members	1	4%
Lack of time	2	7%
Lack of vocabulary	9	31%
No harmony among the group	5	17%
Noisy group	2	7%
Unfriendly classmates	1	4%

Graph 4: Some difficulties that may hinder group participation
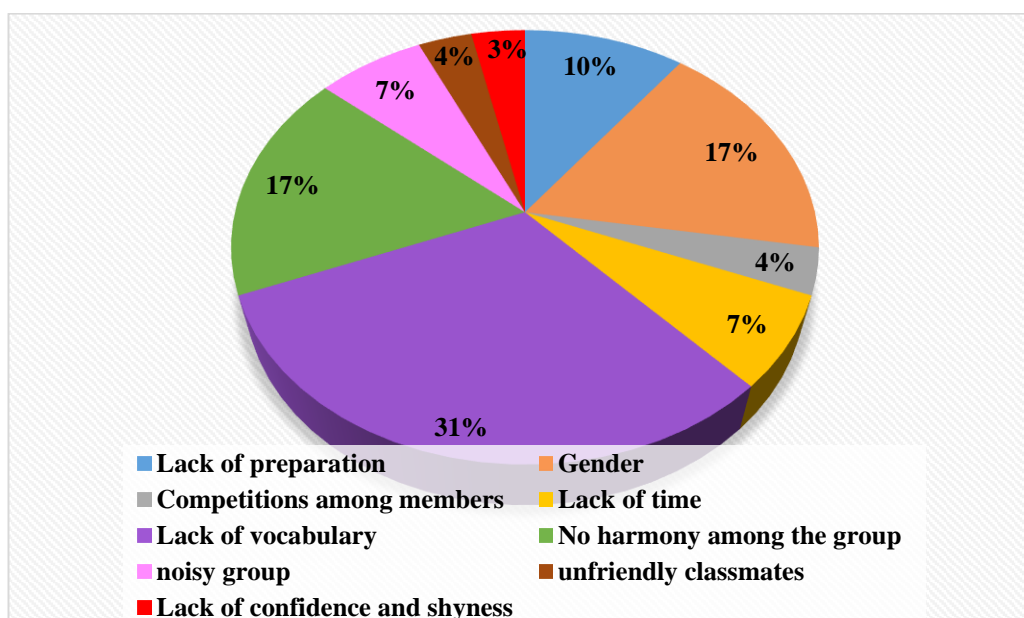
The present question aims at identifying the major factors that could impede students' participation or normal interaction in group work activity. We have suggested seven main factors with the option of adding others if any. As we have said 15 (48.4%) of students claimed that they face difficulties; as the above pie chart represents, 9 (31%) students selected *'lack of vocabulary'*. Since English is foreign language, vocabulary is one of the challenging issues that may affect students' performance and interaction; therefore, improving vocabulary is important for learning the language. Others 5 (17.2%) students were suffering from the *'Gender'* difficulty i.e. they did not accept or did not feel at ease when working with the other sex. Another challenge is *'No harmony among the group'* that was chosen by 5 (17.2%) students; it means that their group need to be more managed and

organized. Moreover, 2 (6.9%) students thought that the '*time*' devoted for the group activity is not sufficient, and 'one' student believed that there was '*competition among the group member*' which affected the group harmony. Additionally, one student (3.4%) believed that he/she was '*lacking confidence and/or shyness*' which prevented him/her from interacting with the group. However, 4 students choose other difficulties including 6.9% who said '*noise within the group*', and 3.4% chose '*unfriendly classmates*' thinking that all of his/her classmates hate him/her. Besides, 3 (10.3%) students claimed that they had difficulty because of the '*lack of preparation*';. Finally, It was important to figure out the main factors that prevent students from participating in group work or make them dislike it in order to be taken into account by teachers to overcome or at list avoid them.

Question 4: Do you think that group work is a chance to understand and share information with your partners?

    a- Yes

    b- No

Graph 5: Students' evaluation of group work
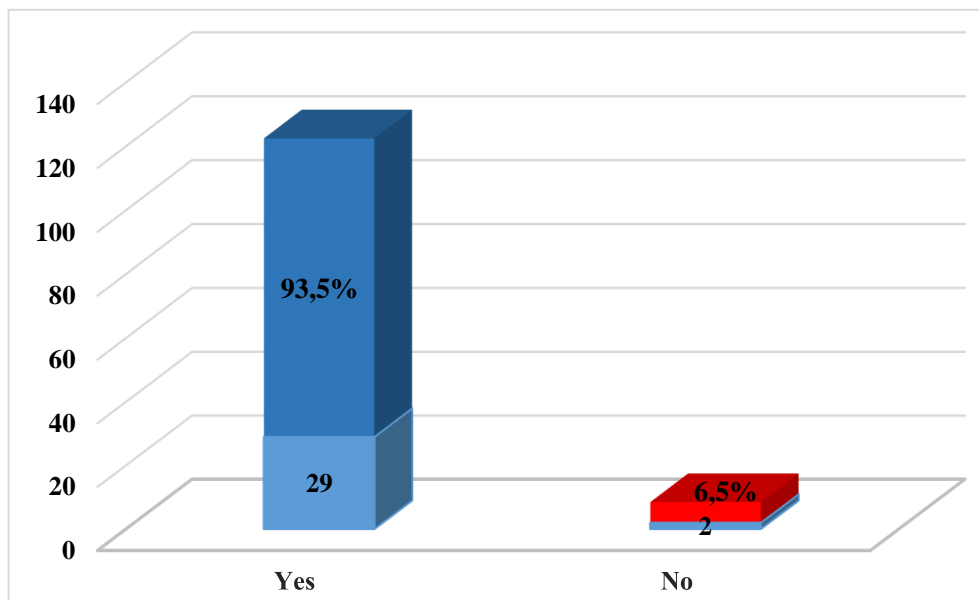
Among the different benefits of group work strategy is sharing knowledge. Answers to this question may help to indicate the extent of students' awareness of the importance and the benefits of working with others. The results show that 29 (93.5%) students believed that group work supported better understanding through interaction and sharing knowledge,

however, 2 (6.5%) answer with refusal i.e. they totally disagreed with the sentence and did not consider group work as an opportunity to share their ideas with others.

Question 5: Are you satisfied with the group final products?

    a- Yes

    b- No

Graph 6: Students' satisfaction of the group final work
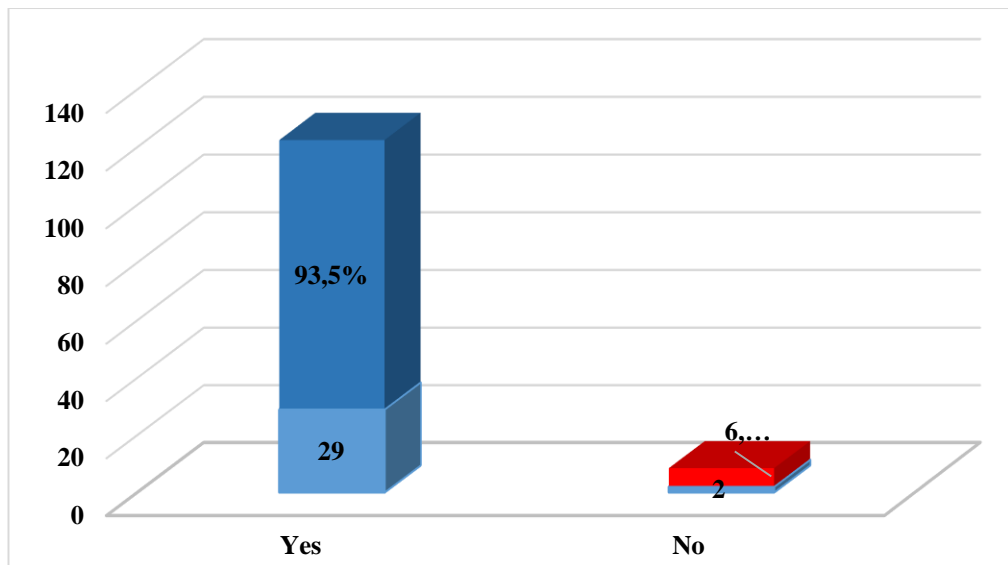
This question aims at revealing the extent of students' satisfaction, are they satisfied with their groups' final product or not because some groups sometimes finish with kind of dissatisfaction, disagreement or complaining about the result. The results summarized in the above graph illustrates that 29 (93,5%) students claimed that they were satisfied with their group outcomes; however, only 2 (6.5%) students seemed to be not satisfied of their final products, it could be because those students did not support group ideas and decision and had different point of views.

Section two: Enhancing classroom interaction

Question 6: What do you think "classroom interaction" means?

    a- Discussion

    b- Participation

    c- Communication

    d- All of them

Graph 7: Students' perception of classroom interaction
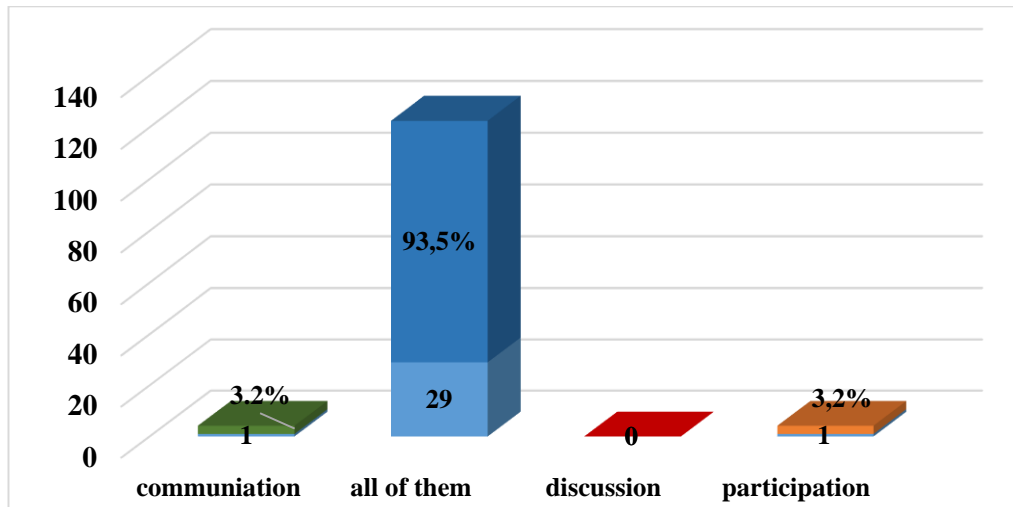
In order to check students understanding of the word interaction we have asked this question. As the graph illustrates, 29 (93.5%) i.e. the majority of the students argued that interaction is combination of communication, discussion and participation. 3.2% said that interaction is associated only with communication in addition to 3.2% of students considered interaction as participation.

Question 7: Successful group work raises classroom interaction.

    a-   agree

    b- Agree

    c- Neutral

    d- Disagree

    e- Strongly disagree

Graph 8: Students' awareness of the role of group work in the classroom interaction
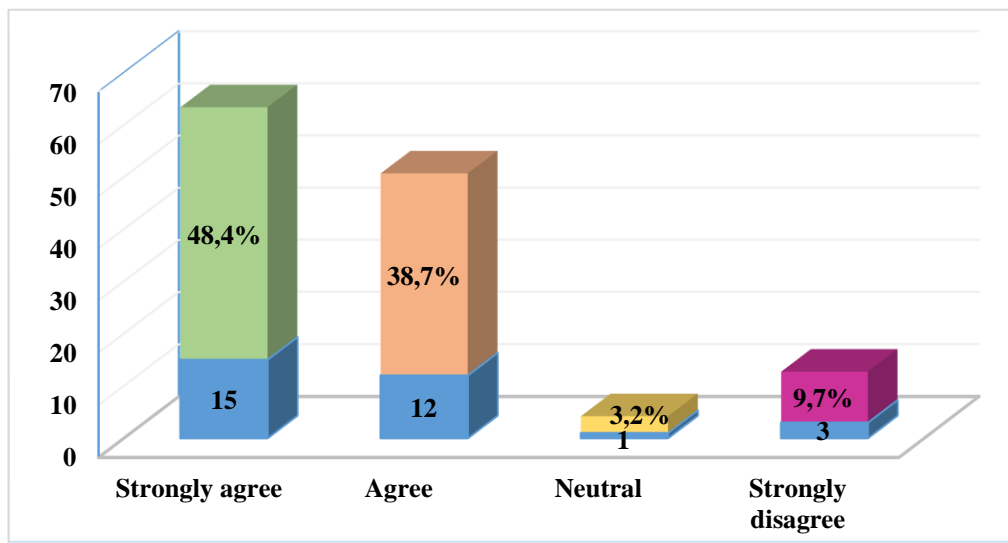
In the current question, the researcher have used 'Likert Scale' from the most agree to the most disagree. The question can help us to figure out students' attitudes and awareness of both group work and interaction. 48% students 'strongly agreed' that group work can improve classroom interaction, also 38.7% agreed on the idea. In addition, 3.2% were neutral and 9.7% 'strongly disagreed' with the statement; this disagreement can be explained by either students dislike the group work strategy or they are unaware of the exact meaning of classroom interaction.

Question 8: Do you prefer working:

    a- In groups

    b- In pairs

    c- Individually

Graph 9: The Students' preferred learning strategy
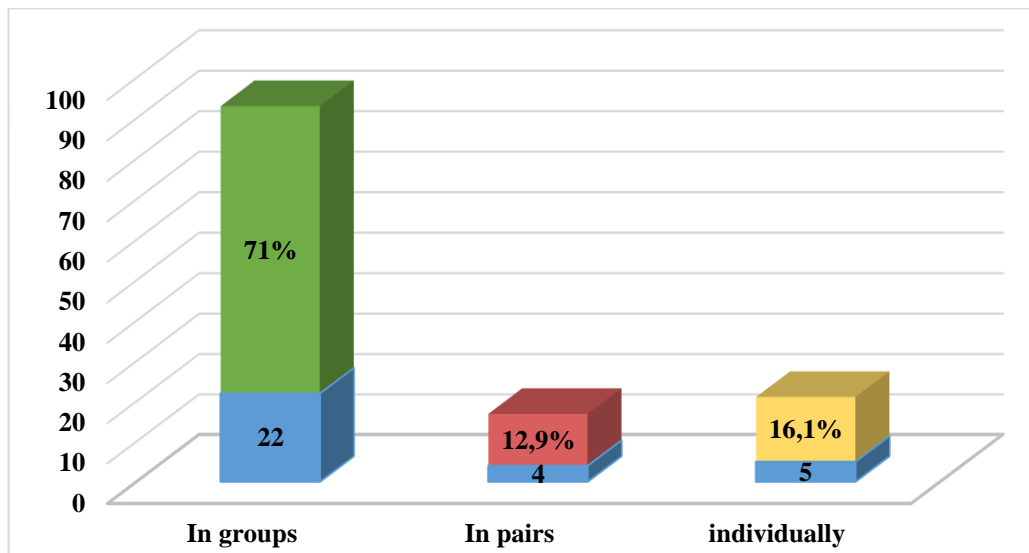
In this question, we attempt to identify the students' preferred strategy among group work, pair work or individual. As the pie chart shows, the majority of students 71% responded that they prefer working with others in group; whereas, 16% preferred working individually and the left 13% found that working in pairs is their preferred strategy.

Question 9: Does the teacher give you equal opportunities to participate?

    a- Yes

    b- No

    c- Not always

Graph 10: Students' opinion of teacher allocating turns
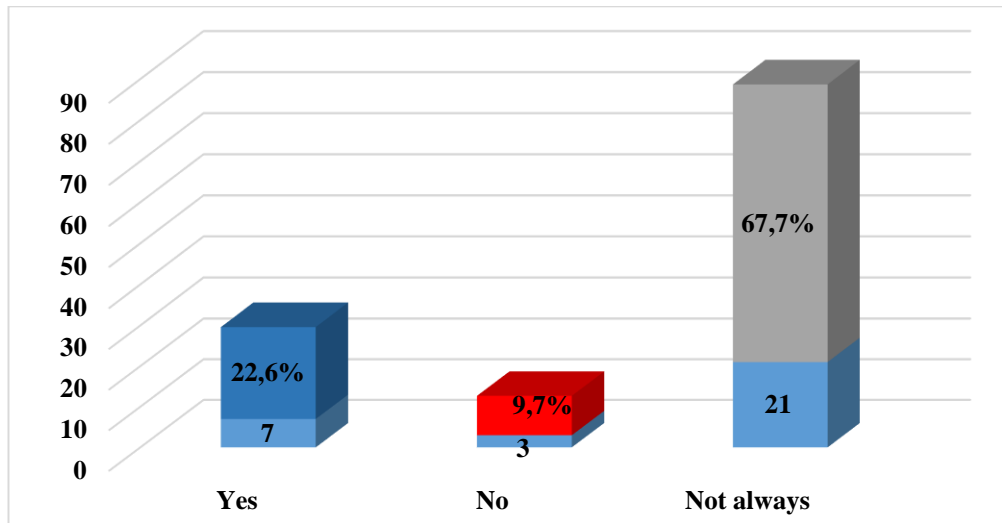
This question aims at determining students' point of views on their teacher mainly his role as being fair in allocating turns. The majority of students (67.7%) thought that their teacher was not always giving equal chances for them to participate or talk; whereas 22.6% of students saw that the teacher is fair in allocating turns. Only 9.7% students believed that teacher was totally unfair i.e. he did not provide the same opportunities for them to express their ideas or answers.

*Question 10***:** Do you communicate using:

   a- Native language (Arabic)
   b- Foreign language (English)
   c- Both

Graph 11: Students' language use during interaction
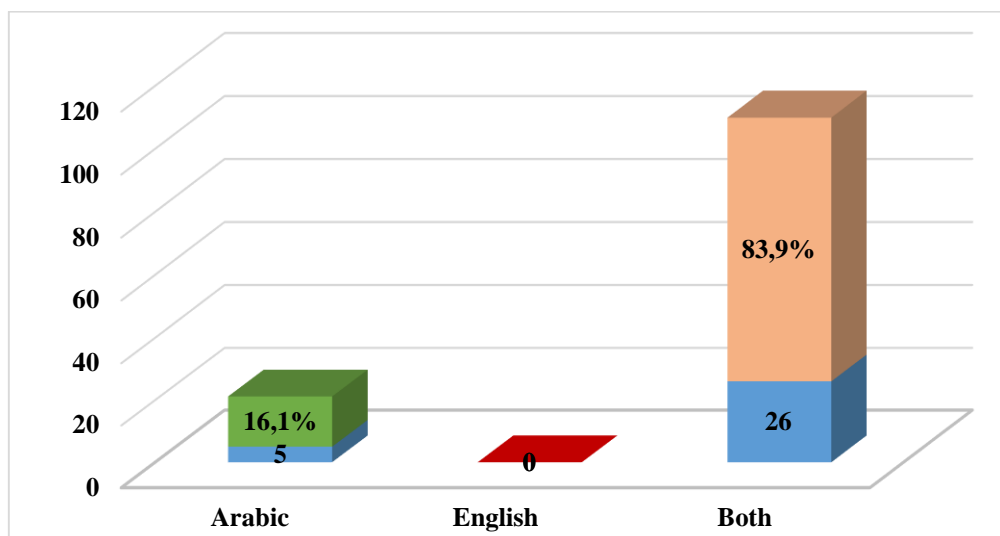
This question reveals which language students use to interact either native, target/foreign language or both of them. A big part 26 (83.9%) of students replied that they

use both Arabic and English when discussing the task, the minority of students 5 (16.1%) respond that they use only Arabic to talk. In fact, lack of English vocabulary is what make students using Arabic.

Question 11: How much do you participate in group discussion?

 a- Never
 b- Rarely
 c- Sometimes
 d- Often
 e- Always

Graph 12: Students' amount of talk in groups
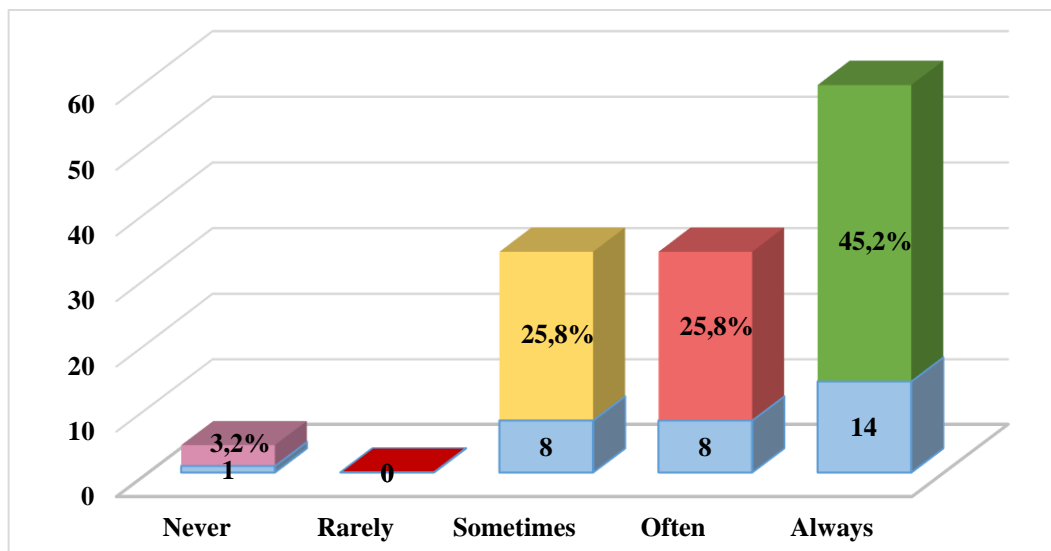
It is important to know how much students are talking in the group to determine the role of group work activities in enhancing classroom interaction. 14 (45.2%) students said that they always participate in the group discussion, 8 (25.8%) claimed that they often talked and discussed the different activities with their group mates. Some others 25.8% of the students argued that they sometimes when talk with the group members; however, only one student (3.2%) said that s/he never participated in the group or shared ideas with them. Students' amount of talk could be affected by many factors such as the fear of making mistakes or the factors mentioned in question three; for instance, the lack of vocabulary, lack of confidence and shyness.

1.3.2.6. Discussion of students' questionnaire findings

Results of questions 1, 4, 5 and 8 indicate that the majority of students enjoy working with others i.e. they have positive attitudes toward the use of group work activities in which they consider it as chance to share knowledge and understand what they could not in traditional way of teaching (whole class interaction). In addition, they are satisfied with their group final product thinking that they are doing well. Despite the fact that there are other students who prefer to work in pairs or individually, this latter may be due to some challenges that make them dislike group work such as gender and anxiety, or because those students think that they can do well when they work in pair or individually.

Question 2 helps us to deduce whether students experienced group work before. The majority of students did not experience group work in other modules. In fact, those who experienced group work before will find it easy to some extent to work with others and manage interaction because the more we practice or experience the more we will become skillful; whereas, those who did not experience the strategy they will face challenges.

Answers to questions 3 lead to conclude that approximately the half number of the participant students have some difficulties believing that they hinder them from interacting with others in which lack of vocabulary is the major challenge which students are suffering from then comes gender problem. Moreover, some of the challenges could be because the fact that some students did not experience or practice real group work before.

Questions 6 and 7 tend to determine the extent of students' awareness of interaction and the role of group work in interactive classroom. In fact, we cannot guarantee that students are aware about the concept since the majority agree that interaction is all of them (i.e. discussion, participation and communication), they could answer the question at hazard also because interaction is a complex process. However, the majority of students consider that there is relation between group work and classroom interaction; in other words, the more group work was successful, the more interaction in classroom raised and improved.

Responses of question 9 indicate that students think that their teacher is not always fair in allocating turns. Obviously, teachers would allocate turns to volunteers first in order to gain time; as a result, this what makes students who do not raise their hands think that their teacher is not always fair. In fact, being fair with students is important that may create more confident and trust environment where students believe that they are equal and have the same chances to participate.

Question 10 helps us to deduce that in EFL classrooms, we cannot expect from secondary school students to speak English all the time; thus, it is difficult. Teacher's role is to overcome native language influence by making students more aware about the significance of interaction in developing and building English vocabularies and motivating them to initiate discussion or making competition using as much vocabulary as possible.

Questions 3 and 11 allow us to make the association between students' participation or interaction within groups and the challenges facing some of them, which may hinder interacting. Comparing the answers of the two questions helps us to deduce that students who do not face difficulties are almost those who always participate; however, others who have some challenges are those who often, sometimes or never participate.

1.3.3. Teachers' questionnaire

1.3.3.1. Objectives

We have used semi-structured post-questionnaire, which is a set of closed-ended and open-ended questions. It aims at identifying teacher's role in motivating students to interact within groups. Additionally, it aims at determining teachers' awareness of the importance of interaction in learning and the factors that prevent this process; besides, their perspectives about the effective way to improve interaction.

1.3.3.2. Description of the main questionnaire

Since our study was conducted on secondary school; therefore, we need to question secondary school teachers. The questionnaire was distributed to nine (9) secondary school English teachers. It consists of 13 questions divided on two sections, the first section is about group work activities that consists 7 questions; this section focuses on teachers' awareness of group work, its importance, how they group students and the factors that may face them when using this strategy. Whereas, the second section is about enhancing classroom interaction that consists of 6 questions; it is about teachers' roles in motivating students to participate, being fair in providing equal chances, also their awareness of the factors that hinder interaction and their role in using group effectively so that could enhance interaction. The questions are set of yes/no questions with justification, rating scale, multiple choices and open-ended questions.

1.3.3.3. Piloting the questionnaire

Before administering the questionnaire items, a pilot study was conducted with the collaboration of 2 secondary school teachers in which we have added 4 questions at the end of the questionnaire (**Appendix 4**); those questions concern the clarity of questions and the layout. The piloted version consisted of 14 questions (7 questions on each section) which aims to give more valid and reliable data. After conducting the piloting stage, question 13 was removed because it was repeated; teachers claimed that the questions and the layout were clear.

1.3.3.4. Administering the questionnaire

The questionnaire was administered to nine (9) secondary school teachers from El Meghaier and one from El- Hamraia on 24th april 2019.

1.3.3.5. Analysis of teachers' questionnaire

Section one: Group work activities

Question 1: Do you use group work in your classroom?

    a-   Yes
    b-   No

Graph 13: Teachers' use of group work in their classes
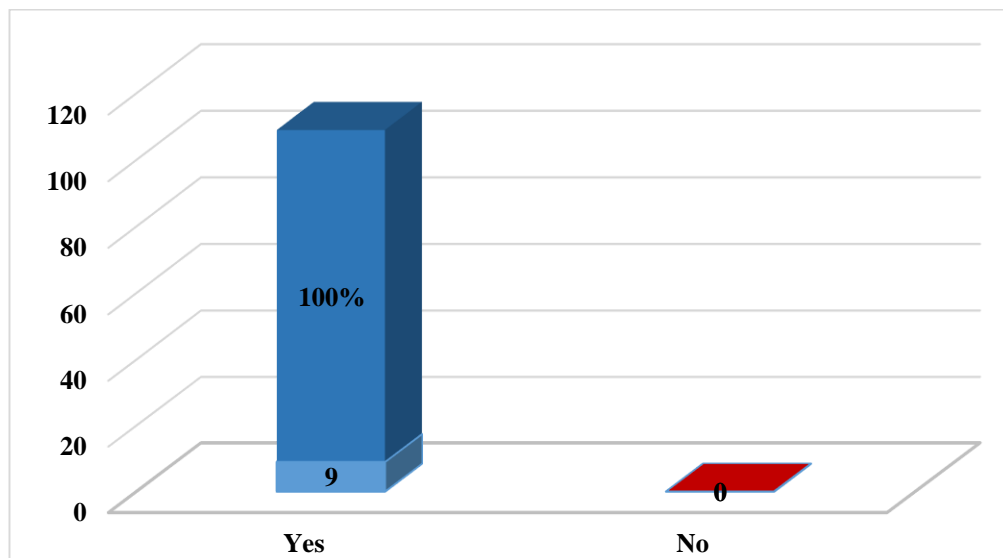
Through this question, we can detect how many teachers are using group works in their classes. Fortunately, all teachers who participate in our questionnaire replied that they used group work activities in their classes; this indicates that cooperative learning is an important approach that is highly used in our schools to facilitate learning, motivate students and improve their interaction.

*Question 2***:** Do you think that group work can be used with all kinds of activities?

    a- Yes

    b- No

Please, justify your answer

     Graph 14: Teacher's perception of the types of activities used within group work
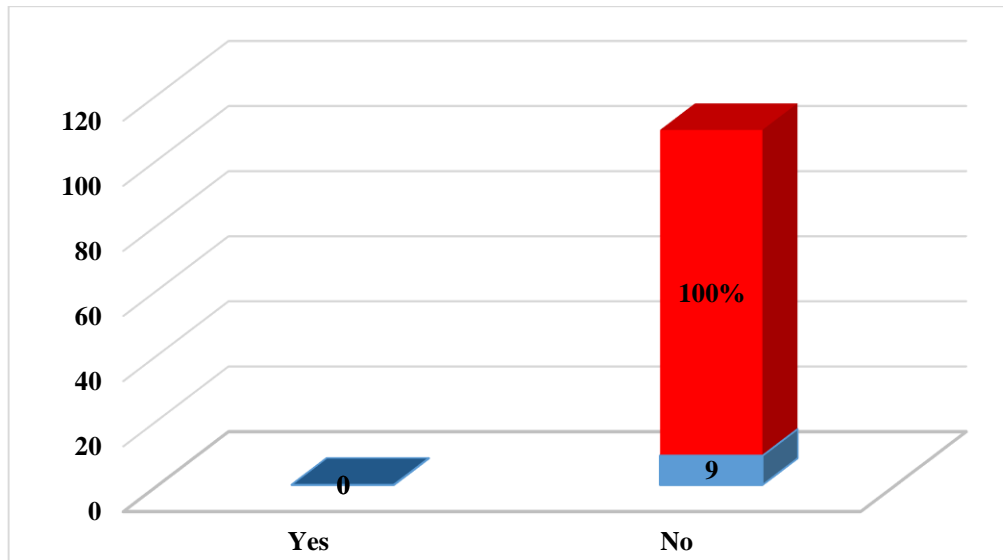
It is significant to know teachers' opinion about the types of activities that could be used with group work. This question will determine teachers' awareness about when and with what activities they have to use groups as strategy. As the graph above shows, all teachers agreed on the fact that group work cannot fit all types of activities in which they provided almost the same justification claiming that there are some activities where students need to be assessed on individually such as speaking (pronunciation) activities, others need to be assessed on pairs; for instance, dialogues. Furthermore, they argue that listening activities as well cannot be tested within groups; other teachers justify their answer saying that group work is for reading and writing activities.

*Question 3***:** Do you think that students are aware of the real meaning of working with others cooperatively?

    a- The majority

    b- Some of them

    c- None of them

Graph 15: Teachers' perception of students' awareness of the real group work
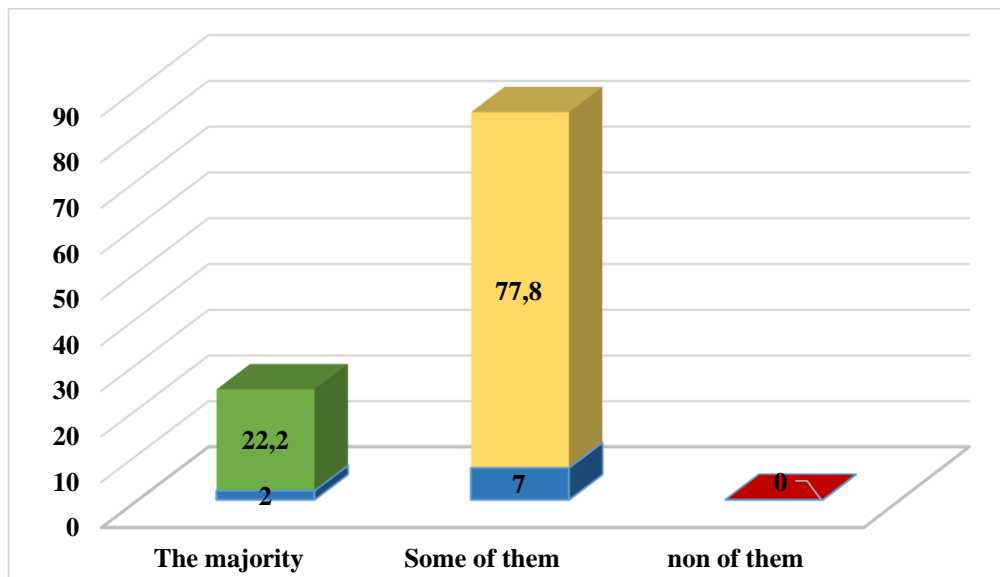
This question aims at investigating the extent teachers' knowledge of their students. The results show that the majority of teachers (77.8%) claimed that only some of their students know the real meaning of group work; however, some others mainly 2 (22.2%) teachers respond that the majority of their students are really aware about group work and how to work cooperatively with others.

*Question 4***:** What are the main group activities that you have used so far?

Table 3.23: Group work activities teachers used so far

Types of activities	Frequency	Percent
Reading	4	17%
Grammar	4	17%
Writing	8	33%
Discussion	2	8%
Games	3	13%
Jig-saw	2	8%
Think-Pair-Share	1	4%

Graph 16: Group work activities teachers used so far
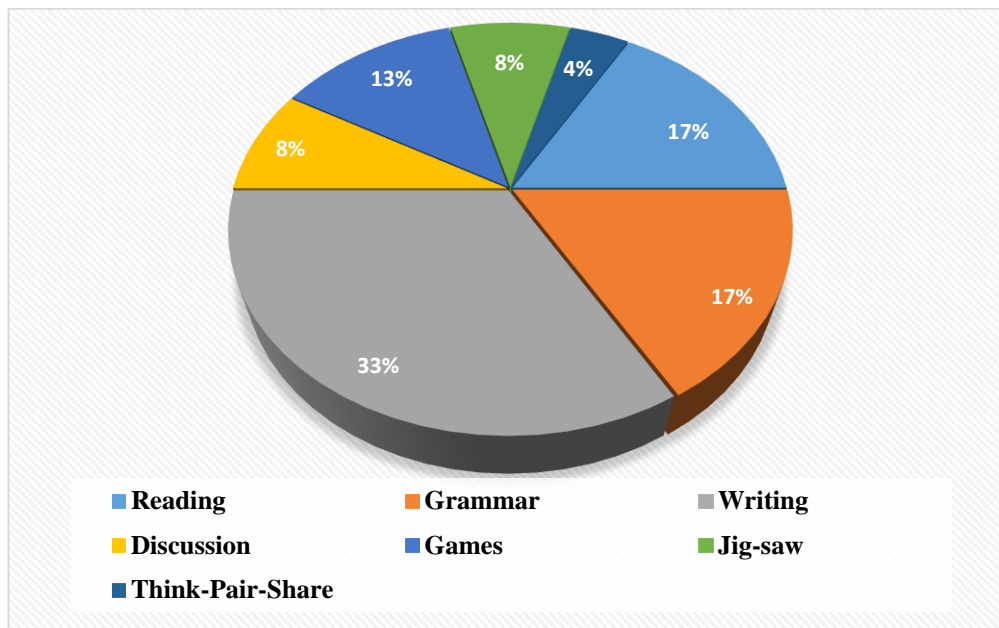
Teachers should vary types of group activities in order to keep students' motivated and engaged in learning tasks. As the table and pie chart summarize the results, 33% of teachers have used writing activities, and 17% of teachers used grammar activities. Some others (17%) claimed that they used reading activities; whereas, 13% of teachers have used games. 8% used discussion activities and other 8% used jigsaw activities (discussed in the chapter 1); however, only 4% used TPS or Think-Pair-share activities (also have been discussed in the first chapter).

*Question 5***:** what do you base on when grouping your students?

    a- Diagnostic test

    b- Randomly

    c- Determine the size and letting them choose their partners

    d- Based on their seating arrangement

    e- Other

Graph 17: teachers' strategies of grouping students
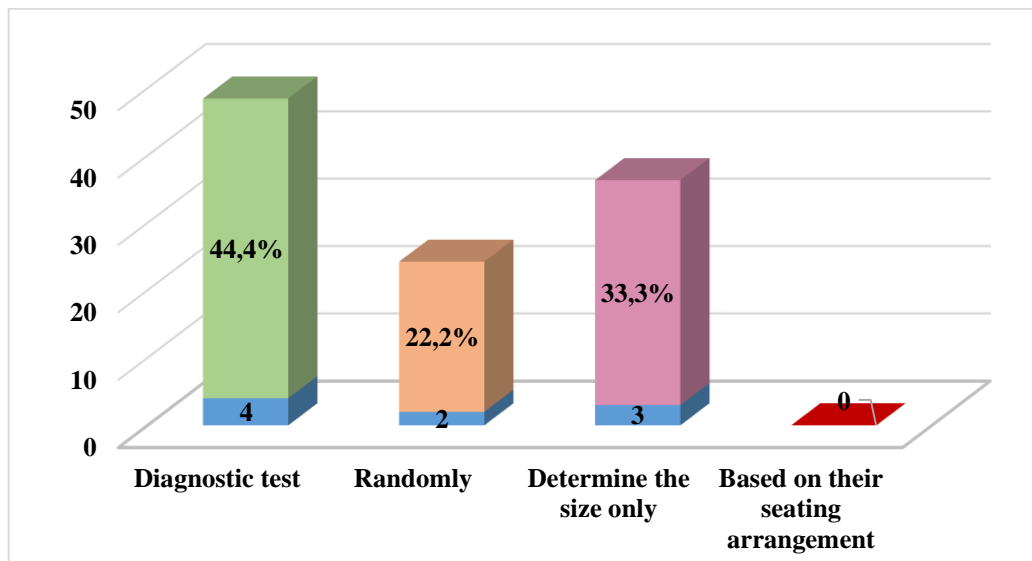
In the current question, we opt to determine how teachers usually set group works, we have suggested four (4) main ways with the option of adding others. 4 (44.4%) teachers answered that they base on 'diagnostic test', this test is done in the beginning of the year in the first session to check students' levels; therefore, it is used to create balance between the groups. Other 3 (33.3%) teachers argued that they only decide for the size of the groups and letting students free to choose who are going to work with, this way is also effective to avoid any problems between students. In addition to 2 (22,2%) teachers said that they do not base on specific way when grouping students i.e. they group their students randomly this means that groups change each time and each student has opportunity to work with different group members, discover different strategies and how his/her classmates think and deal with different activities. Shy students as well may break all the barriers between them and their partners and reduce anxiety when working with different groups.

*Question 6***:** How often were you satisfied with the groups' final work?

- a- Always
- b- Often
- c- Sometimes
- d- Rarely

Graph 18: Teachers' satisfaction of the groups' products
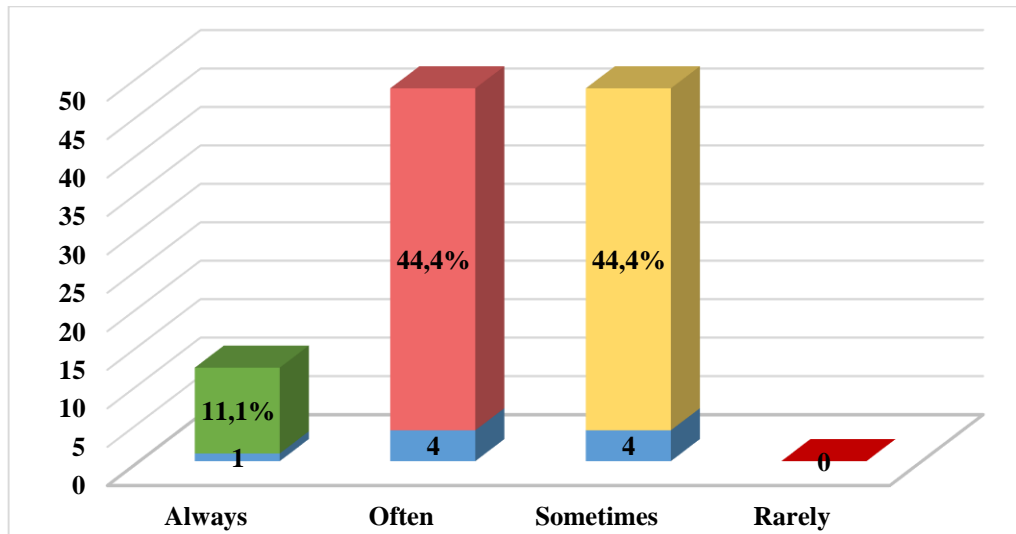
As the graph shows, 11.1% of teachers replied that they are always satisfied with their groups; however, 44.4% said that they are often satisfied with the final work of the groups. Some others 44.4% of the participant teachers claimed that they are sometimes satisfied with what the groups did. Teacher's satisfaction could be related to many factors such as unclear instruction and activities so that students could not reach teacher's expectation, time was not sufficient to finish the task, the way students are grouped…etc.

*Question 7***:** Do you face any challenges when using group work activity?

  a- Yes

  b- No

If 'yes', give some of these challenges

Graph 19: Teachers' perception of challenges facing then when set for group work
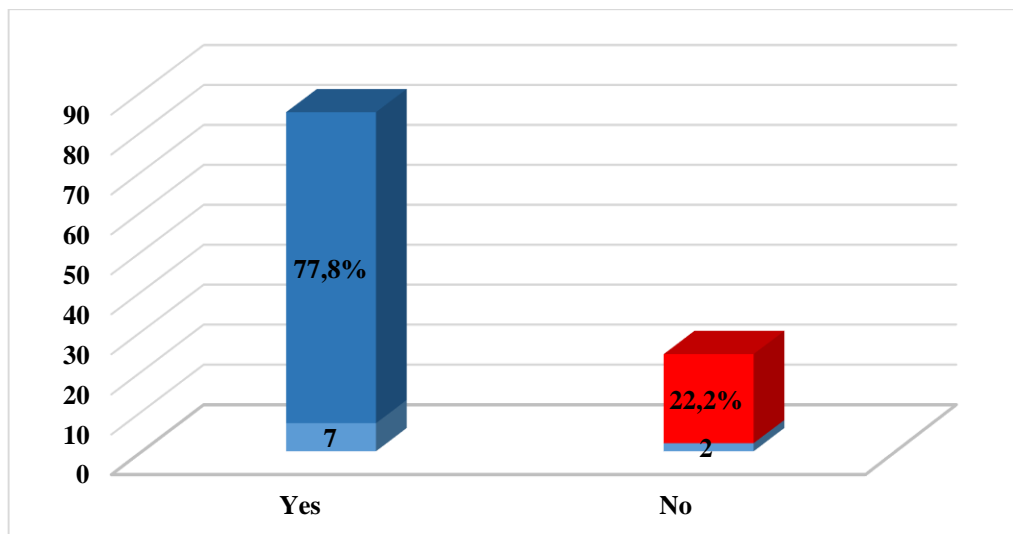
This question tends to identify the main factors and/or challenges that face some teachers when deciding to use group work activity in EFL classrooms. The results as illustrated in the graph above shows that 7 (77,8%) teachers i.e. the majority of them did face challenges when grouping students; however, the left 2 (22,2%) teachers responded with rejection that means they did not face any challenges before.

Table 3.24: Some challenges that teachers face when dealing with groups

Challenges	Frequency	Percentage
Overcrowded classrooms	2	15%
Time constraints	1	8%
Gender problems	2	15%
Noise	3	23%
Classroom management	1	8%
No harmony in students' levels	2	15%
Relationship between students	1	8%
The use of native language	1	8%

Graph 20: Some challenges that teachers face when dealing with groups
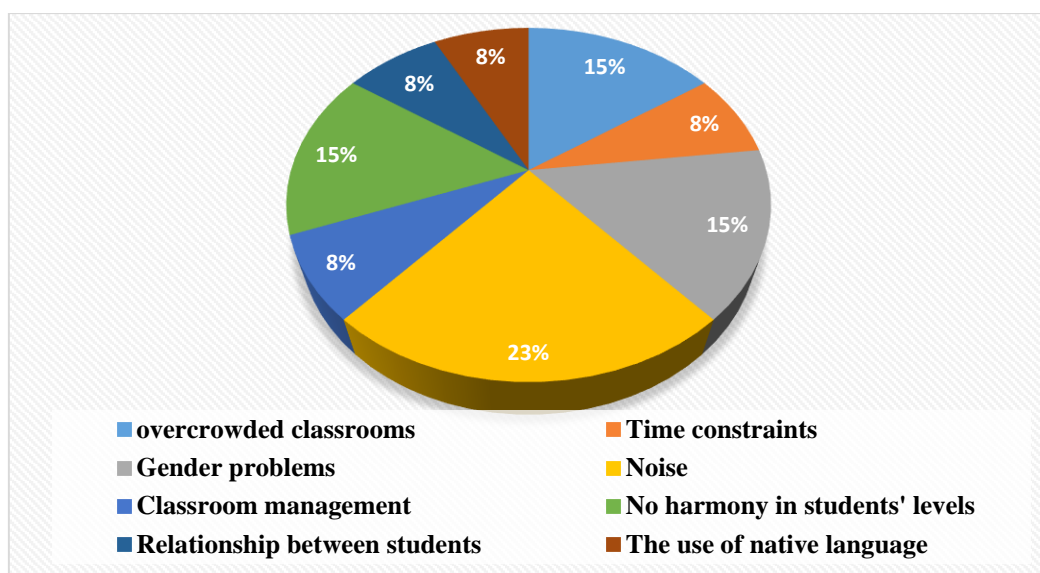
As the table and pie chart demonstrate, 23% teachers suffered from '*noise*' when set for group work and mainly in the beginning of the class when students change their places to form groups. 15% of teachers considered the '*absence of group harmony*' as one of the challenges; it is the teacher's role to manage the group and set roles to each member. Some others 15% face the '*gender challenge*' in which girls and boys do not like to work with

each other; however, 15 % of teachers claimed that they suffered from '*overcrowded classrooms'* the more number of groups grow the more it become difficult the control them. 8% thought that when '*students' relationship'* is bad, this would affect the whole group, another 8% they suffered from '*time constraints'*; in other words, group works are time consumers especially with large classrooms. Additionally, 8% of teachers believed that '*classroom management'* is also one of the challenges that face some students when using group work. The left 8% faced the challenge of the '*use of native language'* because of the lack of vocabulary and the lack of practicing the target language.

Section two: Enhancing classroom interaction

*Question 8***:** How often do you invite your students to interact with each other?

    a- Always

    b- Sometimes

    c- Rarely

    d- Never

Graph 21: Teachers' role as prompter
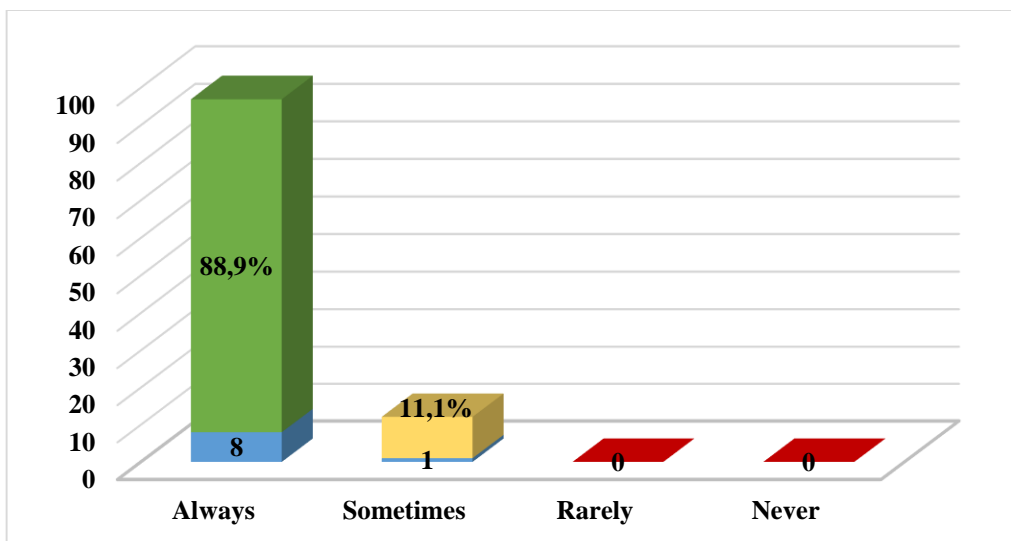
Answering this question may help us to figure out how much teachers are inviting and motivating their students to interact. As the graph demonstrates, the majority of teachers 88.9% replied that they always invite their students to talk in classroom; whereas, only 11.1% of teachers respond that they sometimes when motivate students to participate.

Question 9: How can you use group work effectively to improve classroom interaction?

The aim of this question is to discover new ways or strategies that teachers are using or hope to use them in the future, and which may make group work more effective for improving interaction. 2 (22.2%) teachers viewed that it is important to consider the types of activities i.e. to use motivational tasks such as games or competitions. Others 6 (66.7%) teachers claimed that it is important to account for how and what to consider before setting for groups, some of these considerations are gender, prepare lists each time of groups with different levels and capacities in order to break the ice between students and create kind of balance between the groups. In addition to divide roles; for example, setting leader to each group and make slow learners as juries to involve them in the activity. Another (11,1%) teachers highlighted two main issues, the first is the importance of providing equal opportunities to all students to participate; whereas, the second is the role of an effective management in improving both group work and interaction in classroom.

Question 10: What are the factors that may hinder students from participating in your classroom?

Table 3.25: Teachers' perception of factors hindering students' participation and interaction

Factors hindering interaction	Frequency	Percentage
Classroom management	2	13%
Lack of self confidence	2	13%
Laziness	1	7%
Lack of vocabulary	2	13%
Anxiety & shyness	5	33%
The teacher himself	1	7%
Classroom cize	1	7%
Absence of desire to learn English	1	7%

Graph 22: Teachers' perception of factors hindering students' participation and interaction
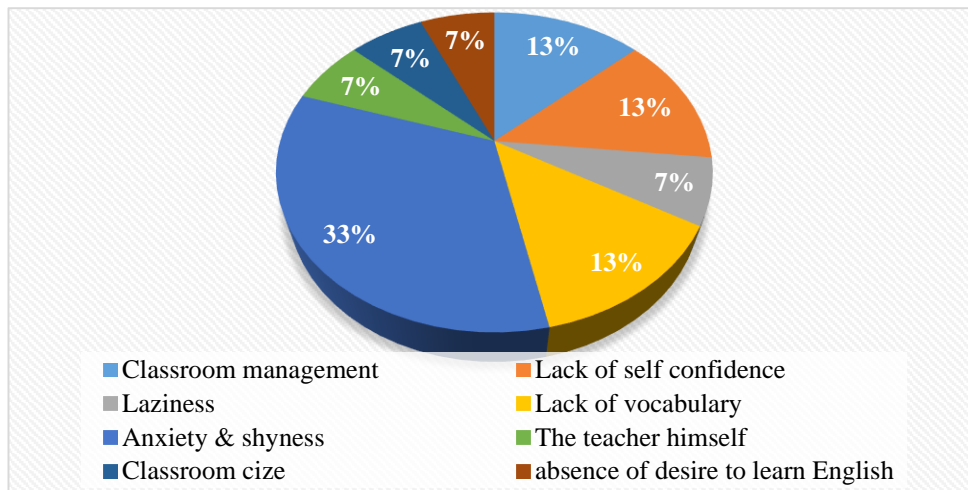
      Teachers' awareness of the main factors that hinder students' interaction helps in finding solutions or alternatives to overcome them. The majority of teachers (33%) claimed that 'anxiety and shyness' are two of the main factors that may affect learning; whereas, 13% of teachers believed that classroom management also could hinder interaction in classroom and they gave examples of unclear instruction and ambiguous tasks. Other 13% of teachers thought that when students lack self-confidence, this mighty results in silence and the fear of making mistakes; however, 13% found that lack of vocabulary can affect students learning; as a result, they use their native language when they fail in finding the needed vocabulary. 7% of teachers saw classroom size another hindering factor i.e. when classroom is large students may lose concentration the same when groups are large in which the more groups grow in number the less students will find chance to talk. Besides, 7% viewed that some students' laziness may influence group and classroom interaction in which those students rely on others to finish their work for them. 7% of teachers thought that students have no desire to learn English and they are not interested on the session. The left 7% of teachers believed that they themselves are source of challenge in class and they could be hindering interaction in some cases, sometimes teacher presence create sort on anxiety and fear for students where they do not feel at ease to talk, afraid of making mistakes and shy to ask for teachers' help.

Question 11: How often do you give shy and/ or anxious students opportunity to talk?

    a- Always

    b- Often

    c- Sometimes

    d- Rarely

Graph 23: Teachers' role in inviting shy students to participate
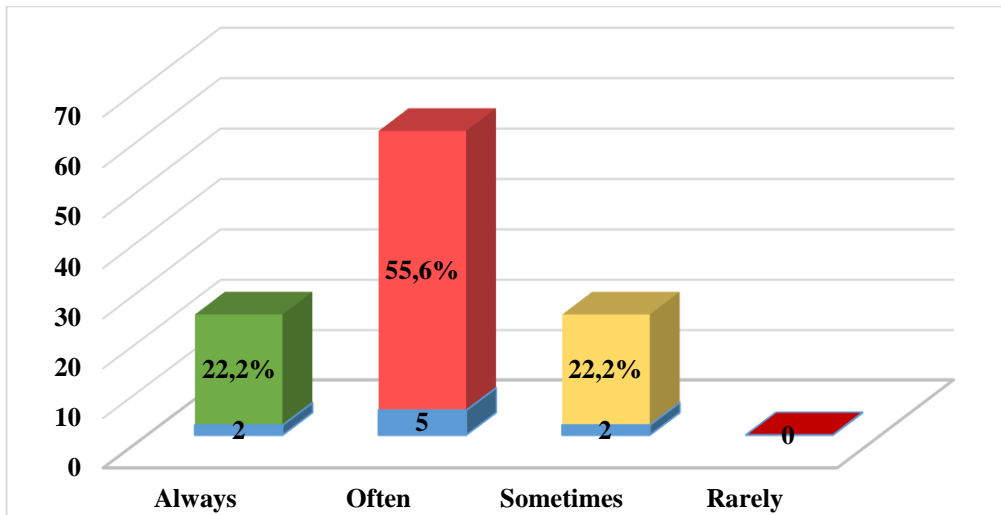
One of the challenges facing teachers in their classes is involving shy, anxious and silent students; therefore, we aim at determining teachers' roles of being fair with all students and giving equal opportunities to participate. 22.2% teachers replied that they always motivate shy students; whereas, the majority i.e. 55.6% of teachers responded that they often invite them to talk and some others 22.2% said that they sometimes encourage shy students to participate and express their thoughts.

Question 12: Do you think that group work is an opportunity for students to be active participants?

   a- Yes
   b- No

Graph 24: Teachers' opinions about group work
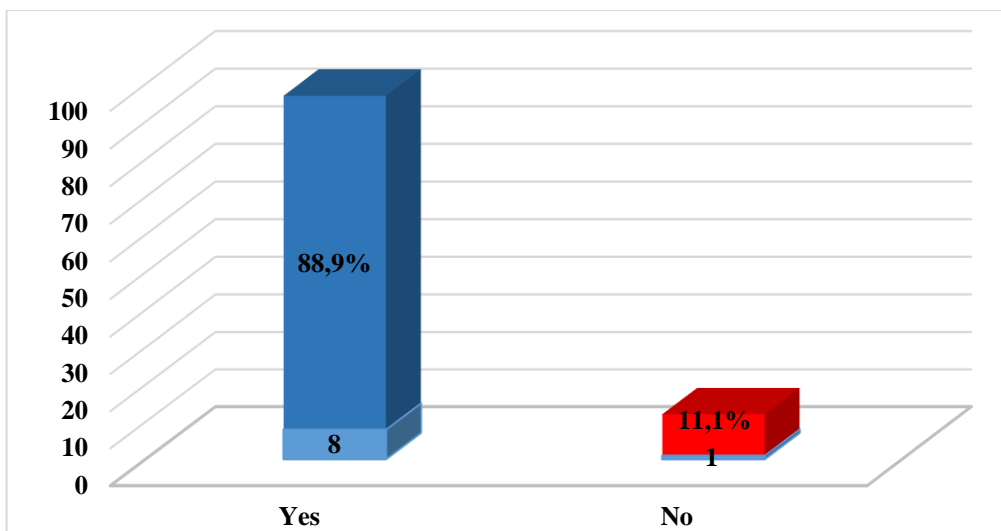
We are attempting to identify teachers' opinions and awareness of the benefits of using group work in their classes and its relation with students' interaction. As the graph illustrates,

88.9% teachers agreed that group work could motivate students to participate and be active among them 55.6% teachers believed that through group work, some students can overcome their silence, anxiety and shyness where they find themselves free to talk. Some others 33.3% justified their answer arguing that when students work in groups, they develop the sense of individual accountability and interdependence (group spirit) where each student be more responsible for his/ her work and learns how to work cooperatively with others; besides, 11.1% teachers claimed that group work helps students to learn how to manage time and raise self-confidence. In addition to 11.1% of teachers said that group work is chance for students to share ideas, discover new strategies in answering questions. However, only 11.1% teacher disagreed with the idea justifying his/her answer saying that some students become dependent and lazy which means that they rely on others to finish their works.

Question 13: How do you usually motivate your students to talk?

Graph 25: Teachers' strategies of motivating students

Through this question, we try to identifying some strategies and ways that teachers use to motivate their students to talk. The results summarized in the pie chart show that 23% of teachers used different group activities and/or strategies such as games, ice-breaking activities, dialogues, brain storming and role plays. Another 23% teachers used different teaching aids; for instance, visual aids and listening scripts in order to encourage their students, some others 16% used sense of humor as strategy to motivate students through keep on smiling, saying jokes and creating friendly and positive atmosphere. However, 15% of teachers were motivating their students through positive feedback and praises, which are

used when students answer correctly or behave appropriately by adding extra marks or giving small gifts. In addition to 15% who preferred to make students read correct answers, write on the board or correct their classmates i.e. provide them with feedback. The left 8% of teachers highlighted accepting students' feelings and opinions as strategy believing that when they value students' ideas by repeating or writing them on the board as well as not embarrassing them this may motivate them to learn.

1.3.3.6. Discussion of the Teachers' questionnaire findings

Results of the questions 1 and 12 helps us to deduce that all teachers who participate in our study are using group work and aware of its importance and benefits in creating channel for students interaction to express their ideas, be active participant and break the ice (barriers) between students themselves.

Questions 2 and 4 results show how much teachers are aware of group work i.e. when and with which activities group work can be used because not all activities can fit group work. Another reason why groups are not used all the time is that there are other skills that students need to be assessed on individually or in pairs. We were able to identify some types of group work activities that teachers have used so far such as writing, ice breaking, jigsaw, think-pair-share …etc.

Answers of questions 3, 5, 6, and 7 determine the connection between teachers' satisfaction, students awareness of group work, the challenges facing teachers, factors hindering interaction and the way teachers decide to group their students. In other words, if teachers are unsatisfied of some or all groups, this could be due to students' unawareness of how to work with others, the wrong way that teachers based on grouping their students. For instance, if teachers group their students randomly or give them freedom to choose their partners, they may face challenge of the absence of balance between the groups in terms of levels and abilities. Indeed, we may find all smart students together or all slow students grouped together; as a result, the group will lose one of its characteristic that is the group harmony and teachers will not reach their expectations.

Questions 7 and 10 results allow us to conclude that besides all the benefits and importance of group work in in improving the sense of cooperation, interdependence… etc, its challenges are greater. The majority of teachers face difficulties when dealing with students such as gender problems (teacher should not oblige any student to work with the

other gender if s/he refuses), relationship between students and group harmony, but they can be under teacher control if they were taken into consideration in advance. Moreover, students as well facing challenges when working within groups, for example, lack of confidence, shyness and anxiety, lack of vocabulary, classroom management and organization; all of these factors could prevent students from participating and sharing their knowledge with others.

From questions 8, 11 and 13, we were able to determine the role of teachers as prompters to motivate and invite their students to interact, and fair in allocating turns i.e give equal opportunities for students to talk. However, anxiety and shyness remain one of the great challenges facing teaching and hindering interaction. Teachers cannot always motivate shy students and pushing them to talk because of different reasons: the first, motivating anxious students may consume time this is why teachers allocate turns to volunteers to gain time. Second reason is that much care on silent, shy and anxious students may lead teachers to be unfair with other students, losing their attention and confidence.

The results of question 9 help us to determine some effective tips provided by the participant teachers of improve classroom interaction through using different activities such as role plays and discussion and strategies like jigsaw and TPS, feedback and praises, sense of humor …etc

Conclusion

In the current chapter, we have analyzed and interpreted the findings of classroom observation, teachers' and students' questionnaires. Based on the research finding, we find that all the participant teachers were using group works in their classes and they were aware about how and when to use group work because not all activities can be done using this strategy. Teachers opted to improve both group work as learning strategy and interaction through interacting with students and inviting them to talk and discuss the tasks together.

In addition, the majority of students enjoyed working with their teammates; however, some of them were not aware about how to work cooperatively because there was no time management and some silent students have no desire to share their ideas or talk. Teacher sometimes tried to make them involved by asking them to read correct answer, wrote on the board …etc. Furthermore, both students and teachers were aware of the different factors,

which might hinder normal group interaction such as anxiety, insufficient time, lack of vocabulary, gender, noise …etc

Generally, group work as pedagogical strategy has its benefits and drawbacks. It helps students to be more interactive thus sociable by creating more opportunities to talk and exchange knowledge. Additionally, group work helps shy and silent to talk freely far from teacher's control. Another benefit of the group work is to make students more responsible for both individual and group behaviours that lead to success or failure of the group.

Implications of the study

- ✓ This study will help teachers to be more aware about the importance of interaction in EFL classrooms and mainly in the process of foreign language learning.
- ✓ Through the effective implementation of group work, students will be more socialized, their relationship will strengthen and the barriers that may hinder interaction will be reduced.
- ✓ This strategy will create more positive and relax atmosphere where students can talk freely far from any kind of threatening.
- ✓ Teachers must know more about their learners in order to know how and what to include in the activities; for instance, asking them about their preferred way of learning (individual, pair, or group work) because students learn differently based on their learning styles, abilities and skills.

- ✓ We hope in the near future that each school set or specify classrooms for group works in order to not wasting time and making noise when forming groups.

General conclusion

Interaction is important in teaching and learning since we learn and acquire any language through interacting with others. Interaction is complicated process because it involves different facets or related factors such as teacher and students, the classroom context, classroom management (material and teaching strategies), the lesson aim and objectives, the outer context or surrounding…etc. Through this study, we have investigated the role of group work activities in enhancing classroom interaction where we have focused on verbal (teacher and students' talks) and some elements of the classroom management (teaching aids, activities and time management). We opted for studying group work strategy due to its importance in making students more active and involved in their learning.

The study was conducted at Habba Abd El Madjid Secondary school- El Meghaier with collaboration of 31 students (population of 59 students of scientific stream). In order to confirm or reject the hypothesis which assumes that if group work was used effectively, students will have positive attitude toward group work and classroom interaction will be improved, we have used two different data gathering tools that are classroom observation and two post-questionnaires (for both teachers and students). We have attended six observation sessions; the class involves six (6) groups of five students (among them one group with 6); moreover, we have decided to observe each group twice in different times of the day (in the morning and once in the afternoon) and in each session we sat with two groups.

The obtained data from the classroom observation, teachers' and students' questionnaires showed the significance of teacher's role in the process of classroom interaction using different strategies, activities and being friendly. As a result, the majority of students had positive attitudes toward group work activities, also it helped students to be more active; therefore, it enhances both teacher-students and student- student interaction. Therefore, it signifies the role played by group work in maximizing students' interaction.

Limitations of the study

During our investigation that aims at studying how interaction occurs within group work, we have encountered some limitations:

- First, two observations to each group were not sufficient because studying interaction required a long time due to the variety of factors that may intervene in the process.
- In addition, due to shortage of time, we could not observe all the elements related to interaction such as non-verbal communication (body language).
- Finally, it would be more valid if the school allow for video record of the sample in which it would show how students interact during group work activities.

Recommendations and suggestions for future research

Based on the research findings, there are some recommendations suggested for teachers, students and for future research.

- ✓ Students should be more aware about the importance of group work and interaction because group work creates more opportunities for students to talk and interact.

- ✓ Group work is recommended as a significant pedagogical strategy that makes students more active and motivated, free to talk and at the same time responsible for their own learning.

- ✓ Group work should be extended to other modules rather than English because the much students experience and practice how to work with others, the more awareness they gain of the importance of both group work and interaction.

- ✓ Teachers should vary the types and techniques of group work activities; for instance, using jigsaw, ice-breaking activities… etc which may motivate students and help them to take part in the learning environment.

- ✓ In addition, teachers should be aware of the different factors that may prevent students from participating or interaction (factors that are under teacher's control) and try to overcome them by providing more positive atmosphere.

- ✓ Teachers should make group work more effective using positive feedback and praises, making groups more managed by assigning roles to each group member, using sense of humor…etc.

- ✓ More research is required concerning the factors that hinder interaction such as anxiety, silence, classroom management, gender problem to find out solution or alternatives, which may help students to overcome them.

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Appendices

Appendix 1:   Classroom Observation Checklist

Date:_____*Time:*

*Observation n°:*_____*Activity:*

_____

A/ *Teacher's Behaviour and interaction with students*

	Yes	No	Not sure	Comment
-Encourages students to participate				
- Reinforces correct responses/performance.				
-Gives directions and/or instructions, restates questions when necessary.				
-Communicates clearly and checks for students understanding and group works.				
-Establishes a climate of trust and teamwork by being fair, enthusiastic and friendly.				
-Inappropriate behaviours are dealt with.				

B/ *Group management & teaching strategies*

	Yes	No	Not sure	
-variety of activities are used.				
Variety teaching aids (technology, video, audio…) are used.				
-Did the teacher use time efficiently?				

C/ *General observation to the group work*

	Most of the time	sometimes	Rarely	Comment
-Give each other a chance to speak				
-Figure things out without teacher assistance.				
-Use quiet voices in their communications				
- Period of confusion and silence				

Group n°:   **Group members (put √ on the correspond number)**

D/ Student- student interaction, behaviours	1	2	3	4	5	6
a- Almost always listening, following directions.						
b- Tries to keep the group on task and participates on discussion.						
c- Asks clarifying questions to his/her partners before getting teacher's assistance.						
d- Offers opinions and helpful suggestions and supports group decision.						
e- Has difficulty in understanding instructions or directions.						
f- Rarely when listens or focuses on task						
g- Does not accept others' ideas.						
h- Talkative member						
i- Silent most of time.						

Group n°:   **Group members (put √ on the correspond number)**

D/ Student- student interaction, behaviours	1	2	3	4	5	6
a- Almost always listening, following directions.						
b- Tries to keep the group on task and participates on discussion**.**						
c- Asks clarifying questions to his/her partners before getting teacher's assistance.						
d- Offers opinions and helpful suggestions and supports group decision.						
e- Has difficulty in understanding instructions or directions.						
f- Rarely when listens or focuses on task						
g- Does not accept others' ideas.						
h- Talkative member						
i- Silent most of time.						

Appendix 2: Students' piloted questionnaire

Dear Student,

This study aims to investigate the role of cooperative learning mainly group work activities in enhancing classroom interaction in second-year secondary school.

You are asked to complete this questionnaire, so please read the questions <u>CAREFULLY</u>, then you would be very kind putting tick (√) in front of the correspond answers.

NB: Do not write your names in the paper.

Thank you in advance for filling the questionnaire.

Section One: The role of group work activities

1- Do you enjoy working in group?

   a- Yes ☐

   b- No ☐

2- Do you work in groups in other modules?

   a- Yes ☐

   b- No ☐

3- Do you face any obstacle that may hinder you from participating in-group work activities?

   a- Yes ☐

   b- No ☐

- If 'yes', what are these factors:

   a- Shyness and anxiety ☐

   b- Lack of confidence ☐

   c- Lack of preparation ☐

   d- You prefer working individually ☐

   e- Gender (do not feel free when working with the other sex) ☐

f- Other reasons ☐

Please give one of them:

………

………………………………………………………………………………………

4- What are challenges that you face when working with others?

    a- Competitions among members. ☐

    b- Lack of time ☐

    c- Lack of vocabulary ☐

    d- No harmony among the group ☐

    e- Others ☐

………………………………………………………………………………………………

5- Does your teacher specify the group members' roles?

    a- Yes ☐

    b- No ☐

    c- Sometimes ☐

 - If no, do you divide roles by yourselves?

    a- Never ☐

    b- Rarely ☐

    c- Sometimes ☐

    d- Often ☐

    e- Always ☐

6- Which role do you prefer?

    a- Leader ☐

    b- Writer ☐

    c- Representative ☐

    d- Time manager ☐

    e- Do not care (you work with any role given to you) ☐

7- Are you satisfied with the group final products?

   a- Yes

   b- No

Section Two: Enhancing classroom interaction

8- What do you think "classroom interaction" means?

   a- Discussion

   b- Participation

   c- Communication

   d- All of them

9- Successful group work raises classroom interaction.

   a- Strongly agree

   b- Agree

   c- Neutral

   d- Disagree

   e- Strongly disagree

10- Do you think that group work is a chance to understand and exchange information with your partners?

   a- Yes

   b- No

11- Are you more active participant when working:

   a- In groups

   b- In pairs

   c- Individually

12- Does the teacher give you equal opportunities to participate?

   a- Yes

   b- No

c- Not always ☐

13-Do you communicate using:

    a- Native language (Arabic) ☐

    b- Foreign language (English) ☐

    c- Both ☐

14- How much do you participate in group discussion?

    a- Never ☐

    b- Rarely ☐

    c- Sometimes ☐

    d- Often ☐

    e- Always ☐

Thank you for filling the questionnaire.

May God bless you all.

…………………………………………………………………………………..

Is the layout clear and organized?

…………………………………………………………………………..

What are the questions that are not clear or understood?

………………………………………………………………………….

Is there any repeated question?

…………………………………………………………………………..

Other comments

…………………………………………………………………………

Appendix 3: Students' main questionnaire

Dear Student,

This study aims to investigate the role of cooperative learning mainly group work activities in enhancing classroom interaction in second-year secondary school. You are asked to read the questions CAREFULLY and complete this questionnaire, so you would be very kind putting tick (√) in front of the correspond answers.

NB: Do not write your names in the paper.

Section One: The role of group work activities

1- Do you enjoy working in group?

   a- Yes

   b- No

2- Do you work in groups in other modules?

   a- Yes

   b- No

3- Do you face any difficulties that may hinder you from participating in-group work activities?

   a- Yes

   b- No

- If 'yes', what are they? You may choose more than one

   a- Lack of confidence and/or Shyness

   b- Lack of preparation

   c- Gender (do not feel free when working with the other sex)

   d- Competitions among members.

   e- Lack of time

f- Lack of vocabulary

g- No harmony among the group

h- Others

…………………………………………………………………………………..

4- Do you think that group work is a chance to understand and share information with your partners?

a- Yes

b- No

5- Are you satisfied with the group final products?

a- Yes

b- No

Section Two: Enhancing classroom interaction

6- What do you think "classroom interaction" means?

a- Discussion

b- Participation

c- Communication

d- All of them

7- Successful group work raises classroom interaction.

a- Strongly agree

b- Agree

c- Neutral

d- Disagree

e- Strongly disagree

8- Do you prefer working:

    a- In groups

    b- In pairs

    c- Individually

9- Does the teacher give you equal opportunities to participate?

    a- Yes

    b- No

    c- Not always

10- Do you communicate using:

    a- Native language (Arabic)

    b- Foreign language (English)

    c- Both

11- How much do you participate in group discussion?

    a- Never

    b- Rarely

    c- Sometimes

    d- Often

    e- Always

Thank you for filling the questionnaire.

May God bless you all.

Appendix 4: Pilot teachers' questionnaire

Dear Teacher,

The present study aims to investigate the role of group work (as one strategy of Cooperative learning) in enhancing classroom interaction (both teacher-student and student-student interactions). Your participation and opinion would be of great value and may add knowledge for future researchers and teachers on how to use group work effectively.

Thank you in advance.

Please put Tick (√) in front of the corresponding answers and make full statements whenever necessary.

Section One: Group work activities

1-Do you use group work in your classroom?

  a- Yes

  b- No

2-Do you think that group work can be used with all kinds of activities?

  a- Yes

  b- No

Please, justify your answer

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3- Do you think that students are aware of the real meaning of cooperative learning?

  a- The majority

  b- Some of them

  c- None of them

4- What are the main group activities that you have used so far?

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

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

5- Based on what you group your students?

    a- Diagnostic test

    b- Randomly

    c- Determine the size and letting them choose their partners

    d- Based on their seating arrangement

    e- Other

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

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

6- How often were you satisfied with the groups final work?

    a- Always

    b- Often

    c- Sometimes

    d- Rarely

7- Do you face any challenges when using group work activity?

    a- Yes

    b- No

  If 'yes', give some of these challenges

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

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Section Two: Enhancing classroom interaction

8- How often do you invite your students to interact with each other?

    a- Always

    b- Sometimes

c- Rarely

d- Never

9- How can you use group work effectively to improve classroom interaction?

……

……

………………………………………………………………………………

10- What are the factors that may hinder students from participating in your classroom?

……

……

11- How often do you give shy and/ or anxious students opportunity to talk?

e- Always

f- Often

g- Sometimes

h- Rarely

12-Do you think that group work is opportunity for students to be active participants?

c- Yes

d- No

Please, justify your answer

……

……

13- What do you do to make silent and slow learners involved in the task?

……

……

……

14- How do you usually motivate your students to talk?

……

……

……..

Is the layout clear and organized?

……………………………………………………………………………………..

What are the questions that are not clear or understood?

……………………………………………………………………………………….

Is there any repeated question?

……………………………………………………………………………………..

Other comments

……………………………………………………………………………………..

Appendix 5: Teachers' questionnaire

Dear Teacher,

      This questionnaire is used as a data collection method in master degree dissertation. It aims at investigating the role of group work in enhancing classroom interaction case of second year students of Habba Abd El Madjid Secondary School in El Meghaier. Your participation and opinion would be of great value and may add knowledge for future researchers and teachers on how to use group work effectively.

    Thank you in advance.

_____

Please put Tick (√) in front of the corresponding answers and make full statements whenever necessary.

Section One: Group work activities

1-Do you use group work in your classroom?

    c- Yes

    d- No

2-Do you think that group work can be used with all kinds of activities?

    a- Yes

    b-No

    Please, justify your answer

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

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3- Do you think that students are aware of the real meaning of cooperative learning?

      e- The majority

      f- Some of them

      g- None of them

4- What are the main group activities that you have used so far?

………

………

………

5- What do you base on when grouping your students?

    a- Diagnostic test ☐

    b- Randomly ☐

    c- Determine the size and letting them choose their partners ☐ ☐

    d- Based on their seating arrangement ☐

    e- Other ☐

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……………………………………………………………………………………………

6- How often were you satisfied with the groups' final work?

    a- Always ☐

    b- Often ☐

    c- Sometimes ☐

    d- Rarely ☐

7- Do you face any challenges when using group work activity?

    e- Yes ☐

    f- No ☐

    If 'yes', give some of these challenges

………

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………………………………………………………………

Section Two: Enhancing classroom interaction

8- How often do you invite your students to interact with each other?

    a- Always ☐

    b- Sometimes ☐

c- Rarely

d- Never

9- How can you use group work effectively to improve classroom interaction?

……

……

……

10- What are the factors that may hinder students from participating in your classroom?

……

……

……

11- How often do you give shy and/ or anxious students opportunity to talk?

a- Always

b- Often

c- Sometimes

d- Rarely

12-Do you think that group work is an opportunity for students to be active participants?

a- Yes

b- No

Please, justify your answer

……

……………………………………………………………………………………

13- How do you usually motivate your students to talk?

……

……

……

……

الملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة لإبراز دور العمل الجماعي في تحسين او تعزيز التفاعل في القسم (بين الأستاذ وكذلك تفاعل التلاميذ فيما بينهم) لتلاميذ السنة الثانية في ثانوية حبة عبد المجيد-المغير. تتيح استراتيجية العمل الجماعي (كإحدى استراتيجيات العمل التعاوني) للتلاميذ فرصة التحاور بحرية وتبادل المعرفة والأفكار مما ينتج عنه تطوير علاقة التلاميذ وجعلهم أكثر اجتماعية. ومن اجل الإجابة عن التساؤلات المطروحة، افترضنا أن التطبيق الفعال للعمل الجماعي او العمل بالأفواج يزيد من تفاعل التلاميذ فيما بينهم وكذا يعطي انطباع إيجابي نحو هذه الاستراتيجية بحيث اعتمدنا على المنهج البحثي المختلط وقمنا باستخدام وسيلتي بحث، الأولى ملاحظة للفصل الدراسي أين لاحظنا كيفية حدوث التفاعل في ستة (6) مجموعات او افواج لمدة 6 حصص بحيث قمنا بالجلوس مع كل فوج مرتين (في الصباح والمساء). بالإضافة للملاحظة قمنا بتوزيع استبيان ل 9 أساتذة ثانوي واستبيان ل 31 تلميذ قسم ثانية ثانوي شعبة علوم لمعرفة انطباعاتهم وآرائهم حول العمل الجماعي. بعد تحليل ومناقشة النتائج المتحصل عليها من الملاحظات والاستبيانين اكتشفنا ان التلاميذ كانوا أكثر تفاعلا وحماسا أثناء عملهم ضمن أفواج وان لأغلبهم موقف ايجابي تجاه هذه الاستراتيجية بالرغم من مجموعة العوائق والعوامل التي كانت موجودة، كما ان للأستاذ دور هام وفعال في تنظيم العمل الجماعي وتحفيز التلاميذ من خلال استعمال أنشطة مختلفة، حس الفكاهة ...الخ. بهذا نستنتج ان للعمل الجماعي كاستراتيجية بيداغوجية دور هام في تحفيز التلاميذ وزيادة تفاعلهم من خلال مشاركتهم للأفكار والمعارف ومناقشتهم لمختلف التمارين والأنشطة.