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*The Importance of Cooperative Learning Technique in Learning Grammar*

**The Case of Second Year English Students in Biskra University**

**Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the Master Degree  
in Sciences of Languages**

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# ***Dedication***

*In the Name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.*

*All the Pries due to God alone, the sustainers of the entire world.*

*This work is dedicated to:*

- ❖ *My beloved parents who gave me every opportunity to achieve my dreams.*
- ❖ *My family: thank you for believing in me; for allowing me to further my studies.*
- ❖ *My brother: Salah Eddin hoping that he will walk again and to be able to fulfill his dreams.*
- ❖ *To all my teachers throughout my career of study.*
- ❖ *To my sisters who always motivate me and help me.*
- ❖ *To everyone who knows me.*
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## **Abstract**

The present study aims at studying the importance of using cooperative group work in teaching grammar to EFL students at the Department of English, university of Biskra. In order to check this correlation, we have hypothesized that well structured cooperative learning would result in motivating students and that if it is used in teaching grammar, it would help students to learn grammar effectively. To verify the validity of this hypothesis, we have conducted a pilot study, through which we have tested the students understanding of the questions and the relevance of their answers to our study. After, we have carried out the main investigation that is, in turn, divided into two kinds of questionnaires; the student's questionnaire and the teacher's questionnaire. The first one is composed of twenty one questions and administered to thirty six 2<sup>nd</sup> year English students at the Department of English, university of Biskra. The second questionnaire consists of seventeen questions given to six 2<sup>nd</sup> year grammar teachers. The discussion of the results has shown that using cooperative learning has a great effect on students learning grammar and well-structured cooperative group/pair work helps second year English students to learn it effectively.

## المخلص

يهدف هذا البحث لدراسة أهمية تطبيق العمل التعاوني و استعماله في مجال تعليم قواعد اللغة لطلبة السنة الثانية في اللغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية بجامعة بسكرة. لاستكشاف ذلك، بنينا بحثنا على فرضيتين، الأولى أن للعمل الجماعي التعاوني اثر على الطلبة، و الثانية أن العمل الجماعي التعاوني يساعد الطلبة على التحصيل المعرفي في مجال قواعد اللغة. للتحقق من هاتين الفرضيتين، أنجزنا دراسة تجريبية على فئة مختارة بطريقة عشوائية من العينة الرئيسية لتقييم فهم الطلبة للمفردات و الأسئلة المستخدمة في استبيان الدراسة الرئيسية. استبيان الدراسة الرئيسية يتكون من 21 سؤال تم توزيعه على 36 طالب و طالبة في السنة الثانية انجليزية في جامعة بسكرة. استبيان الأساتذة المشاركين هو الجزء الثاني من الدراسة الرئيسية يتكون من 17 سؤال قدم ل6 أساتذة قواعد اللغة للسنة الثانية. مناقشة تحليل النتائج أثبتت صحة الفرضيتين. ما يعني أن للعمل الجماعي التعاوني اثر على الطلبة و انه يساعدهم على التحصيل المعرفي في مجال قواعد اللغة.

## List of Abbreviations

**ALM:** Audio-lingual method

**CA:** Communicative approach

**CL:** Cooperative learning

**CLL:** Cooperative language learning

**CLT:** Communicative language teaching

**EFL:** English as a foreign language

**ELL:** English language learning

**ELLS:** English language learners

**GTM:** Grammar translation method

**STAD:** Students team-achievement division

**TT:** Teacher talk

**2<sup>nd</sup>:** Second

**%:** Percentage

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## General Introduction

The teaching of foreign language is an interactive process, which involves active participation of both the teacher and the learner it has been stressed, in FLT methodologies that are more than a system of rules, but as a dynamic resource for the creation of meaning, shift away from the study of language seen as purely a system and shift towards the study of language as communication. For that reason, a great opportunity of classroom interaction is being truly demanded.

With a growing need for more effective, successful and active ways of foreign language learning. Innovation in the language field has been stimulated by special concern for learning through active and collaborative setting. The predominant view is that language is the best learned when students are interacting with each other in groups completing a task or learning content or resolving real life issues-where their attention is not directed toward the language itself, except when a focus on language forms is necessary. Many researchers have called into question at investigating the importance of cooperative learning on EFL students in learning grammar.

Cooperative learning has been suggested as the solution for wide array of education problems. It is often cited as a means of emphasizing thinking skills and increasing higher-order learning education; as a means of improving race relation; and as a way to prepare students for an increasingly collaborative work force.

According to Slavin (1995) defines cooperative learning as a teaching method in which students interact in small groups in order to help each other to gain their goal. That is to say, cooperative learning is an effective technique which helps students to communicate together and exchange their ideas to gain their knowledge.

According to Baker (1992) grammar refers to a set of rules which determine the way of combining units such as words and phrases in a specific language. It can be considered

as a science because it describes how language is used. That is to say, grammar is very important in any language in the world. There is no language which has not its specific grammar and no person can learn a language without learning its grammar.

## **1. Statement of the Problem**

Usually, when someone shows his/her ability to learn a foreign language, we hear people around him/her saying that learning a foreign language is a matter of motivation. Very often, people think spontaneously that learning effectively a foreign language involves motivation on the part of the learner. In psycho-pedagogical contexts, motivation is crucial to all sorts of learning.

Educators, throughout history and across the world have been eager to know the best method that keeps students to learn to. To find out a solution to this issue, many methods have been developed.

Educators introduced the cooperative learning as an effective method and an innovative technique. They suggested that cooperative learning is a better strategy of learning since it helps students to communicate with each other.

In this study, we are going to check whether or not cooperative learning technique has an effect on second year students to learn grammar and also its importance to them when they learning grammar.

## **2. Significance of the Study**

In this research we aim to investigate the most important strategies of teaching that are used by teachers in the classroom, which is cooperative learning technique. We believe that this study will provide the most appropriate ways that assist the teachers to help students to learn. For that reason, we have to propose an effective technique for students to learn better especially in the classroom. Also it is the only way to ensure that students are practicing English among themselves,

especially in large classes, it is the best strategy that teachers use, to make the student responsible on his or her own learning.

### **3. Aim of the Study**

In this study we aim to help learners and teachers implement the cooperative learning strategy effectively in teaching and learning grammar through investigating it's important among EFL students in learning grammar. Cooperative learning strategy is used for teaching, it may help students to minimize individual's problems. For instance, fear, poor, self-esteem and anxiety. We also aim to enhance student's engagement in classroom activities.

### **4. Research Question**

More specifically, this study attempts to answer the following question:

- What effect does well-structured cooperative learning have on second year students to learn grammar?

### **5. Research Hypothesis**

To answer this question, we hypothesize that:

\*If second year English students at the university of Biskra use cooperative group work then, they can learn grammar effectively. In other words, we can say that Cooperative learning technique can have an effect on students in learning grammar effectively.

### **6. Research Methodology**

In this study, we are looking for a correlation between two variables cooperative learning technique and learning grammar. The procedure that will be adopted is the descriptive study through using the questionnaire as a tool by which we gather the adequate data for the study. For the needs of the present study two forms of questionnaire



will be used ;the first questionnaire will be delivered to second year grammar teachers at the department of foreign languages at the university of Biskra; the second one is administer to second year students of English as a foreign language ,at the same department.

The most important methods of collecting needs analysis data are interviews, observation and questionnaires. However, interviews and observations are more useful in helping to better understand student's needs, but more time consuming. Because of time constraints, we will use questionnaire to achieve a more reliable and comprehensive picture.

In this sense, we will direct two main questionnaire; one to the teachers of grammar who have been teaching for a long time to make sure that their answers are the product of many years of observation and evaluation of learner's needs and difficulties. Students questionnaire will be directed to second -year LMD students in the department of English at the university of Biskra. It aims to help students to learn grammar through the group work strategy.

## **7. Literature Review**

Over the last decades, the concept of cooperative learning has been an interesting topic for different researchers.

Cooperative learning is considered as an effective technique which can help the learners to promote their desire to learn; Kagan defines cooperative learning as a group learning activity organized so that learning is dependent on the socially structured exchange of information between learners in groups and in which each learner is held accountable for his or her own learning and is motivated to increase the learning of others.

Slavin (1995) has identified cooperative learning (CL) as the variety of teaching methods in which students work in small groups to help one another learn academic content. In other words, cooperative learning includes different instructional techniques in which students work in small groups and focus on achieving their shared academic goals. As a result of many years of research and practical applications, cooperative learning now exists for virtually imaginable instruction purpose. Other studies show Richards and Rodgers(2001:151) put that cooperative learning originates teacher's and student's questionnaires. outside of language teaching, but because it is compatible with many of the assumptions of communicative language teaching. It has become popular and relatively uncontroversial approach to the organization of the classroom teaching. In the other words, cooperative learning has recognized as the instructional approach to teaching that promotes communicative interaction in the classroom. According to Woolfolk (2004) cooperative learning is an arrangement in which students work in mixed

Hill and Flynn(2006) think that it is by using cooperative learning that students use interaction to understand and master new knowledge. For Johnson and Johnson(2005) ,cooperative learning is “the instructional use of small groups such that students work together to maximize their own and each other's learning». Moreover, Stevens (2008) argues that cooperative learning either with peers or with small groups is a helpful technique for such contradictory views to occur. Cooperative learning is a very important strategy for EFL learners in learning grammar.

Grammar is a central aspect of English language. However, it is a changeable task to teach and learn, because of its complexity. According to Harmer (2001), the grammar of a language can be defined as the descriptions of the rules through

words that can be formed and that can change their meaning, in addition to the possible ways of their construction into sentences. In addition to this, Greenbaum, and Nelson (2002) think that grammar has many applications on many aspects of the language and it is considered as a fundamental element of language. Grammar, in fact, is the essential aspect of English language. English learners will not be able to communicate, without the mastery of rules. Besides in foreign language teaching, grammar has been viewed differently by many linguists since they belong to different linguistic schools. (S, Thornbury, 1999) defines grammar as "the study of what forms or structures are possible in a language. Thus grammar is a description of the rules that govern how a language's sentences are formed." In addition to this, (R, Carter and D, Nunan, 2001, p.36) state: "grammar is used to refer both to language users subconscious internal system and to linguists attempts explicitly to describe –that system".

## **8. Structure of the Study**

This study is divided into four chapters, the first one contains general introduction about the research, The second chapter is about the cooperative learning technique and the third one is about learning grammar. The last one is the field work. It deals with data analysis. It provides a detailed analysis of both.

## **9. Limitation of the study**

This study has some limitations:

- The first limitation is time constraints. Longer time will help us to use different tools and a larger sample of students and a population or a sample of teachers who teach second year English grammar at the department of English at the university of Biskra. This will give our results different dimensions. Extended time

will also permit us to extend our research through specifying the grammar subjects that are taught during second year students.

- The second limitation is the number of the sample. Different teachers teach different groups of the population.

- The third limitation is the nature of the tool used. In investigating a correlation study, the descriptive method of research will be more helpful for the results.

# Chapter one

# **Cooperative Learning**

## **Introduction**

The concept of cooperative learning, the grouping and pairing of students for the purpose of achieving an academic goal, has been widely researched and advocated throughout the professional literature. The term cooperative learning refers to an instruction method in which students at various performance levels work together in small groups toward a common goal. The students are responsible for one another's learning as well as their own. Thus, the success of one student helps other students to be successful.

Our purpose in this chapter is to elaborate what classroom collaboration means. We will describe some characteristics of this type of learning, along with the advantages cooperative learning affords.

## **1. The Nature of Cooperative Learning**

### **1.1. Conceptual Definitions**

Slavin (1995) has identified cooperative learning (CL) as the “variety of teaching methods in which students work in small groups to help one another learn academic content” (p.2). In other words, cooperative learning includes different instructional techniques in which students work in small groups and focus on achieving their shared academic goals. For Johnson and Johnson (2005), cooperative learning is “the instructional use of small groups such that students work together to maximize their own and each other's learning” (p.117). That is to say, all members have to contribute in enhancing their learning and each other's understanding when using CL. Hill and Flynn (2006) think that it is by using cooperative learning that

students use interaction to understand and master new knowledge. Moreover, Kagan (1994) argues that cooperative learning should be implemented in small, heterogeneous groups of students to achieve a common goal. The strategy of cooperative learning is highlighted by Johnson and Johnson(1994) by giving much importance for how students interact with each other to develop their learning. Similar to (Woolfolk, 2004:492) notes that cooperative learning is “arrangements in which students work in mixed - ability groups and are rewarded on the basis of the success of the group”. A broad definition of cooperative learning offered by Grandall(1987)is cooperative learning is “more than just small group activity. In a well-structured cooperation tasks, there is a genuine information gap, requiring learners to both listen and contribute to the development of an oral, written or other product which presents at the group’s efforts, knowledge and perspectives” (cited in Arnold,1999:226-227).

## **2-Characteristics of Cooperative Learning**

### **2.1. Positive Interdependence**

The main principle of cooperative learning is the development of positive interdependence among the members of the same group. Richards and Rodgers(2001) state that “positive interdependence occurs when group members feels that what helps one member helps all and what hurts one member hurts all”(p.196).in other words, positive interdependence is based on the sense of all for one and one for all. Students work together towards a common goal and each one’s gain is associated with the other’s gain. that is each student must feel responsible and committed to the success of his group. it is simply the sense of swimming or sinking together. positive interdependence promotes students to see the benefits of their group work and to maximize their interaction by sharing their

group mates ideas and materials. According to Grandall(1987)notes that: “cooperative groups share a common goal; each learner has an essential role to play if the goal is to be achieved”.(cited in Arnold,1992:227).positive interdependence is realized only when all members of the group interact and motivate each other to learn in order to promote learning and share their common goal(Nunan,1992).

## **2.2. Individual Accountability**

In group learning each member is held accountable for the success of the group. it is a sense of personal responsibility to participate and contribute in accomplishing the task. Each member should realize that his contribution will facilitate the contributions of other members. It takes into account both group and individual performance. It can be structured among students by assigning specific roles and to individual grades for individual contribution(Slavin,1995).the importance of the individual accountability is all about student’s motivation and collaboration to achieve a common goal.

## **2.3. Development of Small Group (Social Skills)**

Social skills are the key of group development and successful cooperative group, in which students need to promote and develop linguistic and social skills which facilitate group interaction, create trust, enhance communication, leadership and problem solving.

## **2.4. Face to Face Interaction (Promote Each Other Success)**

According to Grandall(1987) students work together in cooperative groups, students interact with each other by discussing concepts, responding each other ideas, helping to interact, exchanging information. Hence, Woolfolk(2004) emphasizes the importance of student’s interaction in order to test their thinking to be



challenged, to receive feedback, also Woolfolk claims that interaction with students make them testing, and changing their ideas and abilities.

According to (Alderman,2004,p.219) states that: “grouping structures affect how students interact become friends, and influence each other in engagement in learning”. Face to face interaction is an essential condition to realize students social skills ;friendship, leadership, trust, communication, and resolve conflicts.

## **2.5. Group processing**

Group processing refers to the group regular checking of their progress towards the assigned goal. The assessment of social skills and the working processes to improve group members learning. Jacob (1999) identified five steps of G.P:

- ❖ The teacher or students assess the quality of student’s interactions.
- ❖ Each learning group receives feedback.
- ❖ Groups set goals for improving their effectiveness.
- ❖ The whole class processes how it is functioning.
- ❖ Groups and whole celebrate their successes.

Group work will be effective if only it is influenced by the functioning of group reflection(Johnson,1991).group processing aims to promote and develop cooperative groups in order to gain group goal. “learners also need to reflect upon their group experience, noting how group members interacted doing that task”.(Crandall,1987,cited in Arlund,1999:128).

In other words, group processing aims to facilitate learning and enables the teacher to ensure that students receive their feedback.

## **2.6. Equal participation**

Grouping students does not mean that they are cooperating. Equal participation refers to the teacher's control of groups to ensure that all students get equal opportunities and to avoid the more able member's social or academic dominance who seeks for the most important roles in the group, and benefits more from them at the expense of other members.

## **3. Activities of Cooperative Learning**

### **3.1. Students Team-Achievement Division (STAD)**

In STAD, teams should be assigned in groups of four or five students which are mixed in academic performance, sex and race or ethnicity. The major goal of the team is "to make sure that their teammates have learned the material".(Slavin ,1995:78).after a period of team practice, the students take individual quizzes. Although, students study together, but they are not allowed to help each other with the quizzes. this individual accountability motivates students to do a good job by explaining to each other as the best way to ensure team success and to master the information and the skills being taught.

In cooperative learning methods, STAD is the most appropriate technique for teaching any subject in foreign language classes. this type of cooperative learning is useful for teaching vocabulary and grammar forms. STAD is one of the simplest of all cooperative learning activities.

### **3.2. Jigsaw**

The Jigsaw method was developed by Elliot Aronson(1978). It is provided by Slavin. In this method, students work in heterogeneous teams, exactly as in STAD. Students are assigned chapters, stories or other things to read, and are given "expert sheet" that contains different topics for each team to concentrate on while they

read. When everyone has finished reading, then students from other groups within the same subject meet in an “expert group” to discuss. The experts then return to their groups and take turns teaching their team members. However, it is important that the teacher give quizzes and activities and allow enough time of every one to finish.

The advantage of Jigsaw is that all students read the material, which may make unified concepts easier to understand. Jigsaw is one of most flexible of the cooperative learning activities. In second language acquisition, this method would be very conducive to discussion and negotiation of meaning in the target language.

### **3.3. Group Investigation**

Group investigation is a form of cooperative learning that dates back to John Dewey(1970,in Slavin, *ibid*:11),but has been redefined in more recent years by Shlomo and Yael Sharan at the university of Tel Aviv. in this method, group composition is based on student’s interest, and it is heterogeneous. Students form their own two-to-six groups. Slavin (*ibid*:112) believes that “cooperative interaction and communication among classmates are best achieved within the small group, where exchange among peers and cooperative inquiry can be sustained”.

Group investigation requires the students to seek information from different sources inside and outside the classroom. In group investigation, groups choose topics from a unit that is studied in the class. A central role of group investigation is student’s cooperative planning of learning task. Each group members takes part in determining what they want to investigate in order to solve the problem.

Group investigation exposes students to constant evaluation by both classmates and teachers. This kind of evaluation is more appropriate for advanced levels.

Group investigation offers many opportunities for meaningful language use in second language acquisition.

### **3.4. CO- OP CO-OP**

Co-op Co -op , a cooperative technique developed by Kagan during the 1970s,originated as a way to increase involvement of university students in a discipline course. The main goal of the technique is to allow the students to explore in depth topics of interest to them. In class, students share their interest with each other. Groups are formed, and members learn how to work together. The students select the topics their group will study and divide each topic into mini topics for each student to undertake individually. After investigating their mini topic, each student makes a presentation to their group, and then , together, the students prepare a team presentation. Following the presentation, there is an evaluation process(Kagan,1995;Slavin ,2000).

### **3.5. Scripted Cooperation**

Scripted cooperation is a technique that Dansereau and O'Donnell developed in 1988. The technique resulted from a need to analyze cooperative learning in a more controlled situation. The following prototypical script (O'Donnell and Dansereau,1992,p.122) describes very clearly the steps of this technique:

- ✓ Both partners read the first section of the text.
- ✓ Partner A reiterates the information without looking at the text.
- ✓ Partner B provides feedback. Without looking at the text.

Both partners elaborate on the information (e.g., develop images, relate the information to prior knowledge)

- ✓ Both partners read the second section of the text.
- ✓ Partners A and B switch roles for the second section.

A and B continue in this manner until they have completed the passage

#### **4. Goals of Cooperative Learning**

The main objective of second language teaching is to provide students with the opportunity to practice the language that they are learning. Many scholars agree that interaction among students in groups lead to high achievement. Richards and Rodgers (2001, 193) believe that cooperative main goals are:

To provide opportunities for naturalistic second language acquisition through the use of interactive pairs and groups activities.

- To provide teachers with a methodology to enable them to achieve this goal and one that can be applied in a variety of curriculum elements.
- To enable focused attention to particular lexical items, language structure and communicative functions through the use of interactive tasks.
- To provide opportunities for learners to develop successful learning and communicative strategies.
- To enhance learners motivation and reduce learners stress and to create a positive affective classroom climate.

Cooperative goals aim to create professional and academic norms among students that have an important effect on student's achievement.

## **5. Redefinition of the Roles**

Cooperative language learning (Kagan,1987;Kessler 1992;in Richards and Lockhart,1996) attempts to redefine the roles of both teachers and learners in the light of methodology, which relies more on cooperative group work and pair work activities.

### **5.1. Teacher's roles**

The role of the teacher in cooperative language learning differs considerably from the role of the teacher in traditional teacher-directed teaching. The teacher's role changes from a deliverer of information to a facilitator of learning. The teacher has to create highly structured and well-organized environments for classroom instruction. Harel (1992: 169) defines the teacher's role in the classroom as follow :

During this time the teacher interacts, teaches, refocuses, questions, clarifies, supports, expands, celebrates, and empathizes. Depending on what problems evolve, the following supportive behaviors are utilized. Facilitators are giving feedback, redirecting the group with questions, encouraging the group to solve its problems, extending activity, encouraging thinking conflict, observing student and supplying resources.

With CLL, Hyland (1991; in Richards, and Lockhart, 1996:102), states that the teacher's role is to:

- Share the responsibility for managing both interaction and learning and with students.

- Stimulate interactive language use through group work and cooperative problem solving.
- Provide clarification feedback, and motivation support in the classroom.
- Coordinate group activities.
- Choose classroom tasks which involve information sharing; cooperative reasoning, and opinion sharing.
- Structure the learning environment so that students cooperate to obtain learning goals

During cooperative learning activities, the teacher serves as a manager and facilitator, to check the group progress and to intervene where and when is needed.

## **5.2. Learner's role**

In cooperative learning, the essential role of the learner is as a group member who must work with other group members to make certain that everyone in the group has mastered the content being taught. In CLL, the student plays the major role. Slavin(1995) believes that in order to ensure participation among students, “[they] are expected to help each other, to discuss and argue with each other to assess each other’s knowledge and understand each other’s”. (p.2). through cooperative learning, students become responsible for their own learning .as Richards and Rodgers (2001)put it, learners “are taught to plan, monitor, and evaluate their own learning”(p.199).this does not mean that the teacher has no role to perform. Instead, he is there as an educator, friend and facilitator of learning; his job is more than handing out grades and marking papers with red ink.

Richards and Rodgers (2001) report that within CL work, “each group member has a specific role to play in a group, such as noise monitor, turn-taker monitor, recorder or summarizer”. (p.197)

Kagan(1994;in Woolfolk, 2004:495) states that the teacher must assign a variety of roles for each group member, to make sure that everyone in the group is involved in a specific role in accomplishing an overall group task. The following table lists some roles that learners can perform.

<b>Role</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Encourager</b>	Encourages reluctant or shy students to participate.
<b>Praiser/Cheerleader</b>	Shows appreciation of other's contribution and recognizes accomplishment.
<b>Gate keeper</b>	Equalizes participation and makes sure how one dominates.
<b>Coach</b>	Helps with the academic content, explains concepts.
<b>Question commander</b>	Make sure all student's questions are asked and answered
<b>Taskmaster</b>	Keeps the group on task
<b>Recorder</b>	Writes down, decisions and plans.
<b>Reflector</b>	Keeps group aware of progress (or lack of progress).
<b>Quiet captain</b>	Monitors noise level.
<b>Material monitor</b>	Picks up and returns materials.

**Table 1:** possible student's role in cooperative learning groups (Kagan, 1994; in Woolfolk, 2004, p.496).

## **6-Advantages of Cooperative Learning**

There is consensus in the literature reviewed that group work is viewed as a meaningful and valued learning method and has unlimited advantages, from which we can cite the following:



- Groups have more human resources and are more productive than individuals and so should be able to read more, cite more sources, collect more data, and so on. The total ‘time on task’ is greater than for individual assignments.
- Groups can cope with greater complexity and to be more creative than can individuals and so should be able to tackle more challenging tasks, produce more solutions to problems, and produce more elaborated analyses, taking into account more issues.
- Students learn more in groups than they do on their own.
- It reduces the dominance of the teacher’s talk(TT)over the class(Mackay and Tom,1999,26)
- It increases the opportunities for students to practice and to use new features of the target language.
- It promotes cooperation among students. They do not simply throw words to each other; they interact orally with the purpose of helping each other.
- Freedom for teacher to master new professional skills, particularly those emphasizing communication.

There are additional important benefits of cooperative learning. Slavin (1995:60) found that the most important psychological outcome of cooperative learning is its effect on student’s self-esteem. Student’s beliefs that they are valuable and important learners are of critical importance for their ability to be confident decision-makers, and to be productive individuals. In cooperative classroom, motivation found to have great effect on enhancing student’s performance Slavin (1995:16) states that:

Rewarding groups based on group performance (or the sum of individual performance)creates an interpersonal reward structure in which group members will give or with hold social reinforces

(such as praise and encouragement )in response to  
group mates task-related efforts.

The role of cooperative language learning in enhancing student's motivation has proved to be a major one. Focuses on the fact that students want one another to succeed and that is why they help one another.

### **7-Cooperative Learning Pitfalls**

While many potential benefits arise when group work is used, some pitfalls may hinder the learning process. Some important pitfalls that must be avoided when assigning group work activities to be successful as proposed by Slavin (1996) these are mainly “the free rider effect”, “the diffusion of responsibility”, and “task specialization”. The free rider effect happens if the group is not well structured. In such case some group members do all or most of the task while others go along for a ride or a hitch-hike. This appears generally when the group has one assigned task such as handing a single essay or completing a single report. In addition, students who are perceived to be low achievers are ignored by the more able members and seen as passive members in the group, and this creates the problem of diffusion of responsibility. This can be avoided, according to Slavin (1996), in two principle ways: the first is to make each group member responsible for a special part of the group assignments and have a specific role to play in the group. However, this can lead to the problem of task specialization making students learning a great deal of the part of the task they worked on but less about the rest of the task. The second is through having students are individually accountable for their learning in which group reward is based on the sum of the individual quiz score or performance of each member. In this way, each member has to make sure that he has learned the content as well as the other group members.

Likewise, some “students may not like the people they are grouped or paired with” (Harmer, 2005, 21). However, not all learners are positively disposed towards working cooperatively on tasks. In cooperative tasks, some students find it more humiliating to make mistakes in front of others than in front of the teacher. In fact, to solve this problem, the teacher has to set up the groups on the basis of students “preferences”. There are various problems associated with the organization of group work that can create a negative effect on the outcome of the task. The physical characteristics of the classroom, in particular the arrangement of the furniture can go a long way toward encouraging communication. For the teacher, the biggest problem may be the crowded classrooms. Because of the number of students, group discussion can become noisy and disruptive. There is also the risk of that students will engage in off-task talk that are generally carried in the mother tongue language.

To sum up, cooperative learning like any approach has many advantages and benefits. However, many teachers emphasize the right decisions of conducting cooperative learning otherwise, its benefits would not be obtained.

## **8- Outcomes of Cooperative Learning**

Cooperative learning has specific outcomes in specific areas, which contribute in the student development in the classroom and even outside the classroom and some effect can be lifelong effects.

### **8.1. Learning Strategies Outcome**

When using cooperative groups, learners practice many strategies either directly or indirectly. Explaining, arguing, negotiating meaning, repeating key words several times, and using words in actual contexts are important to be used in cooperative learning (Hill and Flynn, 2006). Simultaneously, Oxford (1990) considers these techniques as examples of memory and cognitive strategies. Autonomy and responsibility are two Meta cognitive

strategies that are inevitably resulted from well- structured cooperative group (Brown,2001).that is to say, when cooperative groups are well-planned, each student becomes responsible for his/her individual learning and the group's learning, and for the groups' benefits as a whole, which makes all learners autonomous and responsible.

## **8.2. Achievement Outcomes**

Many studies argue that learners who participate during group work activities have usually gained larger achievement than learners who use traditional learning (Gambrell, 2007). Hoynes (2007) indicates that for English Language Learners (ELLs), using cooperative group activities would help them achieve their academic goals because they are actively involved in “comprehensible output” and, at the same time, receiving “comprehensible input”; both have almost the same importance in learning a language. Through negotiating meaning and explaining points of view, learners adjust their speech and ideas to their peers' needs and levels. By doing so, they can produce comprehensible input and understand comprehensible output from other peers. For this reason, Hill and Flynn (2006) think that interaction is the most important component of cooperative group work that helps to build new knowledge.

## **8.3. Social outcomes**

There are many positive results of using group work learning on the social relationships. First, it provides respect for others and cooperation between students (Hohn, 2005). When learners help their peers and feel helped by others, they start to strengthen their relationship with them and maximize their respect for them. Slavin (2006) thinks that this effect-most importantly-would last even outside the school. Students develop good relationships in class and extend them to their social life. Stevens (2008) indicates that these social effects may go beyond time and place of using cooperative group work. In

other words, the positive relationships that were built in the classroom are proved to remain outside the classroom and after ending the group work.

#### **8.4. Affective outcomes**

According to Brown (2001), the use of cooperative learning makes learners feel secure from criticism; this feeling has great effect on the effectiveness of cooperative learning. This security is derived from dividing the embarrassment that one would feel when correcting his/her mistakes among the group members. Through this way, all learners, even the shy ones, would become active participants in the learning process. Johnson and Johnson (2005) note that the feeling of commitment learners have when they are involved in the cooperative work will decrease their “disruptive” and “off-task behavior” (p.118). It is the student’s feeling of participation in something meaningful and having active role in it that lead to commitment and feeling engaged in the activity.

#### **Conclusion**

Cooperative learning technique is the most traditional language teaching method in foreign language teaching. It tends to promote productivity and achievement and more opportunities for classroom communication. Furthermore, it shares the same essential set of principles with communicative language teaching.

We know the great deal about the effect and also the importance of cooperative learning strategy among EFL students and the conditions which are necessary to make cooperative learning more effective for achievement outcomes. It is now possible for teachers to select from variety of cooperative methods to achieve different purposes and to use cooperative learning as the main organizing scheme for classroom instruction.

# Chapter two

# Learning Grammar

## Introduction

Grammar is a central aspect of English language. However, it is a challengeable task to teach and to learn, because of its complexity. It is a significant linguistic element that helps language learners to communicate effectively. In addition, grammar is closely interrelated to other language aspects such as: lexis, phonology and semantics. In other words, communication cannot occur without grammatical rules. Besides, language aspects can be deductively or inductively taught based on various methods and approaches. Furthermore, grammar plays a significant role in foreign language learning in order to realize a successful communication.

In this chapter, we are going to define grammar and identify its role in English language teaching. We are further going to present different types of grammatical rules. In addition to that we are going to speak about the sides of teaching grammar in communicative approach with some examples of activities that can be used through cooperative group work.

## 1. The Nature of Grammar

### 1.1. Definition of Grammar

Grammar has been identified in different ways depending on the linguistic theory that sets the definition, either traditional, structural, transformational or cognitive theory of linguistic; however, as Al-Moutawa and Kailani (1989) has stated, all the theories agree on the fact that grammar is “the internal organization of language” (p.69).

Grammar is a central aspect of English language. And there are many definitions of grammar. For Ur (1980), grammar is “the way a language manipulates and combines words or bits of words in order to form longer units of meaning” (p.4). In other words, it is the formation of words and the constructions of sentences and discourses in order to have a

meaningful product. According to Harmer (2001), the grammar of a language can be defined as the descriptions of the rules through words that can be formed and can change the meaning of words. In addition to the ways of their construction of sentences. It is, then, grammar which tells us that “meaningful”, is acceptable in English, but “meaning able” is not acceptable, and a sentence like “she says it is difficult” is appropriate in English, but “say difficult she it is” is not appropriate.

For many writers, grammar consists of the study of syntax and morphology; however, for others (for example, (Greenbaum & Nelson, 2002) it refers just to syntax.

Grammar is considered as a fundamental element of language. In addition, Byrd, Patricia (1998) reported that learners may be aware of grammar rules; however, they may not be able to use them when they speak or write. Besides, teachers attempts to implement modern techniques rather than the traditional, disaffected ones, to teach how to apply grammar rules effectively in real communication.(Harmer,1999), in his book indicates how to teach grammar, and he says that the best strategy to teach and practice grammar is through context. He refers to the importance of teaching and using the rules of grammar in context rather than through isolated sentences.

In foreign language teaching, grammar has been viewed differently by many linguists since they belong to different linguistic schools. (S, Thornbury, 1999, p.1) defines grammar as “...the study of what forms (structures) is possible in a language. Thus grammar is a description of the rules that govern how a language’s sentences are formed”. Besides, (G. Leech, 2005, p, 3) argues that: “we shall use the term grammar in reference to the mechanism according to which language works when it is used to communicate with other people”. In addition, (R, Carter and D, Nunan, 2001.p.36) states: “it is used to refer both to language users’ subconscious internal system and to linguists attempts explicitly to codify-or describe-that system”.



## **1.2. Syntax**

Syntax is defined by Harmer (2001) as the way words are ordered and combined to make sentences (p, 13). According to Akmajian (1997), syntax is the study of “how words fit in to the overall structure of sentences in which it can be used” (p.12).syntax, therefore, focuses on the rules that are the building of sentences and utterances.

It would be impossible to memorize all sentences and utterances of a language, because there are certain rules that govern the link between words to have a large number of sentences and utterances. Then, these rules are the main concern of syntax.

## **1.2. Morphology**

Morphology is the study of the “internal structure of words” (Akmajian, p.12). In other words, it is the study of word formation. It studies the morphemes and their combinations to structure a word. Morphemes are defined as “the smallest meaningful unit of the word”.“Smallest” does not refer to the phonological or written length but it means that they cannot divide it more into other meaningful units. For instance, “interchangeable” is composed of three morphemes: “inter”-, “change”, “- able”, each one of them conveys a meaning and cannot be more divided into meaningful units.

There are two types of morphemes; inflectional and derivational morphemes. Derivational morphemes are prefixes and suffixes that change the nature of the word or its meaning (Bollinger &Sears, 1982), such as, “-ise” which change the nature of a noun to a verb as in “memory(noun)” to “memorize(verb)” and “ re”- which change the meaning of the verb as in “ start” to “ restart”. Inflectional morphemes are those morphemes that have effects on the form of the word. They include, English, the following markers “s” of the plural, “s” of the possessive case, “s” of the third person singular in the present, “ed”, of the past simple, “ing” of the progressive form, “ed”, or “en” of the past participle, “er” of the comparative form of adjectives and “est” of the superlative form of adjectives

(Akmajian, 1997; Bolinger&Sears 1981).The following are some examples respectively to each inflectional morpheme: boy => boys, John => John's, eat => eats, live =>lived, walk =>walking, write=> written, tall => taller => tallest.

## **2- The Role of Grammar in English Language Learning (ELL)**

Studying any language helps us to use it more effectively. One central aspect for using the language accurately is the grammar of that language. Hedge (2000) claims that many teachers give grammar teaching their great attention in their classroom methodology. Grammar gains such importance because of its role. Pacheler (1999) state: “the rules of grammar facilitate communicative economy” (p.94). That is to say, that with grammar we can produce unlimited number of utterances and sentences with a limited number of words and sounds. Ur (1980) argues that units of the language can only be used successfully if and only if we know how to combine them appropriately; for this reason, grammar is important for acquiring a language. Moreover, the role of grammar is not limited to the level of the sentence but it also affects other longer discourses. This is argued by Williams(2005) who emphasizes that the effects of grammar is essential for writing since it provides information about the forms and functions of the words. In addition, Widodo (2006) also say that the roles of grammar go beyond the sentence and utterance level to affect the four skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. In listening and reading we cannot grasp the intended information but in speaking and writing, producing comprehensible meaningful sentences and utterances. Greenbaum and Nelson (2002) think that grammar has many applications on many aspects of the language, among which punctuation, interpreting literally (or non-literally) texts and discourses. As an example, if we do not know what a clause is or what are the types of clauses, we cannot put appropriate punctuation markers when clauses are combined together.

### **3- Grammar as Form and Grammar as Function**

Sentences are made up of words. The classification of these words into grammatical categories, according to Williams (2005, p52), is called “form”. For example, a word like “table” is a noun; a word like “walk” is a verb and so on. Williams (2005) states that the form of the word is not related to the sentence. That is to say, if “table” is a noun, it is a noun either in “this is a table” or in “I brought a beautiful table”. Theoretical grammar has described eight possible forms of words in English: noun, verb, adjectives, adverbs, conjunctions, pronouns, prepositions and articles.

However, language exists in reality as sentences not as individual words. Williams (2005) defines “function” as the state of words, when they are put together in sentences (p.53). There are two levels of functions, function at the level of words within the sentences and function of sentences within discourse. For example, in a sentence, a noun can function as a subject, like in: “the man is talking now”; or as an object, like in: “are you calling that man?”

At the level of the sentences and utterances, according to Al-Moutawa and Kailani (1989), “function” refers to the intended meaning or speech act of that sentence such as greeting, offering, thanking and explaining. They are more related to the context and also the social environment. Thornbury (1999) has stated that words put together have specific intended meaning in certain situations, this function they have, has a direct link to communicate. That is to say, that there is a relationship between identifying grammatical function and communication because what is communicated is the intended meaning of the speaker that depends on the context of sentences and utterances.

Williams (2005) believes that forms and functions can be related to several ways; knowing one of them helps us to determine the other. For example, the following question form “do you study here?” would mean in certain cases a direct interrogative function.

However, according to Thornbury (1999), it is not always the case because one form can express many functions as well as one function can be expressed through many forms. For instance, on the one hand asking for help can be expressed through the following forms:

- \*Can you help me, please?
- \*Would you mind helping me?
- \*If you can help me, I would be so thankful.
- \* I need your help.

On the other hand, “if–clause” form, for example, can express many functions:

- \*If I find you out, I would kill you (expresses warning)
- \*If you suffer from headache, take medicaments. (It expresses advice)
- \*If he did not come, you must ring me (It expresses obligation)

## **4-Grammar Teaching Presentation**

### **4.1. Descriptive rules and perspective rules**

In any language, there are two types of rules. The first one regulates the way words are put together and describes how words combination can be; these rules are what Greenbaum and Nelson (2002) name “Descriptive rules”. Swan (2005) states that: “descriptive rules are simply accounts of linguistic regularities” (p.66). That is to say, descriptive rules permit people to judge if a sentence can be said in a language or no. For example, the descriptive rules of English allows us to say that a sentence like “He went out of home quickly” is possible but a sentence like “went out home of quickly” is not possible.

The second type of rules is related to the standard boundaries speakers of the standard language put. These rules state which “usage” should be employed and which usage should not be used (Greenbaum & Nelson, 2005, p.5). For instance, it is not preferred for speakers of Standard English to split an infinitive like in “to actually feel”.

Swan (2005) defines perspective rules as “linguistics regulation rules which individuals devise in the belief that their languages need regulating, tiding up or protecting against change” (p.66). They are then put and used by certain people in certain situations like in formal writings.

## **4.2. Explicit and Implicit Knowledge of Grammar**

According to Brown (2007), a person with explicit knowledge knows about language and the ability to articulate those facts in some way (p.66). It is acquired according to Pacheler (1999) through “form- instruction” (p.67). That is to say, it is taken in formal sittings, like classrooms, through the focus on grammar rules. It is the knowledge that has the advantages of facilitating input and the benefit of monitoring the output (Widodo, 2006, p.125). Explicit grammar involves the use of grammatical terminology of grammar.

Implicit knowledge on the other hand is, according to Brown (2007), unconscious internalized knowledge of language that is easily used during spontaneous language tasks similar to written or spoken conscious learning process (Widodo, 2006, p.126). Grammatical knowledge is acquired for instance, when learners are engaged in natural communicating activities. Learners through this way unconsciously acquire to use them naturally. For example, a native speaker would speak his mother tongue correctly but may not know the rules that govern his spoken or written language.

## **4.3. Deductive and Inductive Approach**

Thornbury (1999) defines deductive approach as the way of teaching grammar in which rules are presented first then their applications through examples, and inductive approach as the of teaching grammar through examples from which rules are understood. These two approaches are rooted in linguistic and psychological theories.

According to Broughton et al. (1980), deductive approach is supported linguistically by structuralisms and psychologically by the behaviorist theory; while, the inductive approach is supported linguistically by the generative grammarians and psychologically by the mentalists. The behaviorists for examples emphasize the importance of reinforcement through repetition of correct form that characterizes the deductive approach and the mentalists emphasize the subconscious cognitive devices that are used in the inductive approach which are also similar with the ones of the first language acquisition.

Widodo (2006) suggests five benefits for each approach. Deductive approach could be time-saving since it points in a direct way to the rules; whereas, inductive approach trains learners to be autonomous through the indirect way of knowing the rules. It is the cognitive ability of adults which is developed in the inductive approach; at the same time, in the deductive approach, it is their cognitive process and its roles are to use Meta language which is acknowledged. When teaching deductively, a number of applications are immediately given. Whereas, teaching inductively helps the learner to be more active in learning process. On the other hand, learners with analytical style find themselves at ease when they are learning deductively; on the other hand, there are learners who are interested in the challenge presented in problem-solving activity found in the inductive approach of teaching. There are some rules that can be simply and clearly presented deductively but not to confuse the learners; if the problem solving is done collaboratively, then learners will have many opportunities to use their language.

## **5-Grammar and Other Aspects of Language**

### **5.1. Grammar and Vocabulary**

Grammar is also related to all other aspects of language; lexis, semantics and other aspects of language. Foreign language learners should be aware of English vocabulary

(nouns, verbs and proverbs...) as they must know correct grammar rules in order to communicate successfully. In fact, we need to view grammar in its sense as including everything speakers know about their language; the rule of word formation (morphology), the rule of sentence formation (syntax) as well as an appreciation of vocabulary (quoted in Purpurap,p.174). In addition, grammar is an important element in language. It relates the systems of sounds to written symbols and meaning (Greenbaum and Nelson, 2010).However, grammar rules govern speakers' utterances and writings. They control our communication. In addition, (Griffiths, 2008, p.182) states that: "...we can infer grammar has relationship with morphology". In fact, grammar and vocabulary work together in any language. While grammar is the set of rules that govern the combination of words into meaningful sentences. In addition, isolated English words may convey meaning. (Harmer, p.3) indicates "vocabulary...also communicates meanings". For example, the English word "ticket" the meaning is conveyed simply at the lexical, or word level. It means "would you buy a ticket?", although there is no grammar in the sense of either morphology or syntax. Besides, (Swan,p.11) claims if I say "salt, please" across the table, the code item "salt" functions effectively as a message". That is to say, grammar is essential context to indicate the words' functions in real communication.

## **5.2. Grammar and Meaning**

Grammar is also linked to another language aspect, semantics; the term is referring to the study of meaning which human being use to understand other's utterances and writings. According to (Harmer, ibid, p.3), "vocabulary communicates meanings". For example, one says "coffee!"He/she means "Do you need coffee?". Thus, the term "coffee!" conveys a meaning. However, if such term is used in different situations as: "Tell John to bring coffee". The word's meaning is not completed. Therefore, people need grammar for some situations in order to communicate successfully with meaningful ideas.

However, they should take into consideration another feature of grammar which is called “meaning”. In other words, meaning is communicated through grammar (Harmer, *ibid*). People need to connect based grammar rules, since it has relation to the meanings that are being encoded (quoted in Halliday, 1985).

### **5.3. Grammar and Phonology**

Grammar and phonology are closely related in grammar instruction. (Greenbaum and Nelson, *ibid*, p.1) defined phonology as “...the usual term for the sound system in the language”. Grammar helps language learners to develop their speaking and listening skills using the language sounds. Besides, learners attempt to use the grammatical rules which govern the language sounds more accurately.

## **6-Approaches and Methods in Teaching Grammar**

### **6.1. Grammar Translation Method**

In the western world, learning foreign language at schools was similar to Latin and Greek learning languages. Learning Latin was taught through a technique which focuses on learning grammatical rules, vocabulary memorizations, translation of texts, doing written exercises, such strategy is called “the classical method” (Brown,2000). In the Eighteenth and Nineteenth centuries, many other languages were taught in educational institutions. Teachers used this method as the main strategy for teaching foreign languages. However, little attention was given to teaching oral use of language. Moreover, in the nineteenth century, the classical method was called “Grammar Translation Method” (Chung, S.C, 2011). At the end of the nineteenth century, there was a need for oral proficiency. Speaking skill was considered as an important skill in foreign language learning. This change was called “Reform Movement”, and the implicit approach was started to be adapted in teaching grammar (quoted in Richards and Rodgers: p.7). Grammar Translation, is a traditional teaching method, was the first method which is used in



teaching grammar. It was spread and used widely in the nineteenth century in classroom situation, particularly when language learners handled literary texts of the foreign language. Moreover, it focused on using translation as the best technique to learn. In addition, (Harmer, *ibid*, p.21) states that “Grammar –Translation courses followed a grammar syllabus and lessons typically began with an explicit statement of the rule, followed by exercises involving translation into and out of the mother tongue”. Thus, such method emphasized the explicit approach presenting grammar point, explaining it and after, providing exercises for practice.

## **6.2. The Audio- Lingual Method**

The audio-lingual method is based on the behaviorist psychology. It was used during the period of 1950’s and 1960’s. Language is learnt through habit-formation (Thornbury, *ibid*). In the classroom, teachers focus on primarily using drills in the foreign language. The students keep repeating grammar rules until they understand it in the right way, to avoid making mistakes. ALM does not provide the students with opportunities to judge their abilities or their level in foreign language (Thornbury, *ibid*). In other words, students cannot express their ideas and compare them with native speakers. Besides, (Brown, *ibid*, p.73) argues that the students do not have opportunities “...to put the oral skills of another language to actual, practical use”. In addition, teachers reward the students for their positive reactions and they also punish them, if they make mistakes during the learning process. Furthermore, grammar should be presented through the inductive approach through teaching process. (Richards and Rodgers *ibid*, p. 86-87) state “...the rule of grammar should be taught only after the students have practiced the grammar points in context”. However, (Harmer, *ibid*, p.88) describes such ALM that “...the language is de-contextualized and carries little communicative function”. To sum

up, the important goal to learn a language is to be able to communicate. Such approach ignores the student's cognitive abilities.

### **6.3. The Communicative Approach**

Second and foreign language learners need to improve their communicative skills. Communicative language teaching emerged in 1960's as a reaction against the behavioral approaches such as the audio-lingual method. It is based upon the "communicative approach". Moreover, such approach was developed in the 1970's, when socio-linguistics emerged and the belief that communicative competence consists of more than the knowledge of the rules of grammar. (Thornbury, Ibid). Furthermore, Thornbury, *ibid*, p.18) argues that "communicative competence involves knowing how to use the grammar and the vocabulary of the language to achieve communicative goals, and knowing how to do this in a socially appropriate way". On the other hand, CLT involves not only teaching grammar forms, but also language functions such as greeting, apologizing. (Harmer, *ibid*, p.84) describes this approach as "...is the name which was given to a set of beliefs which included not only as a re-examination of what aspects of language to teach, but also an emphasis in how to teach". In addition, such approach offers lesson opportunities based on learners needs to use the language in real contexts. Besides, CLT over various dimensions during the learning process. (Richards, *ibid*, p.2) asserts "communicative language teaching can be understood as a set of principles about the goals of language teaching, how learners learn a language, the kind of classroom activities that best facilitate the learning process and the roles of teachers and learners in the classroom". Thus, CLT helps learners to develop their communicative competence and present connections between grammar forms and meanings.

### **6.3.1. Written Grammar**

According to Harmer (2001), grammar has initially told us how to make a written language. For example, it is known that a written text is composed of grammatical sentences which are at least composed of a verb and a subject; and sometimes, an object. Grammar of written texts focuses on expressing ideas in full sentences, in addition to this, avoiding repetition and unnecessary information (Eastwood, 1994). Swan (2005), suggests that written discourse is produced as “monologue”, where there is no instant clarification or correction (p.40). It is therefore, clarity and the straightforward style that are the dominant for written discourse in order to avoid the misunderstanding which cannot be corrected at the moment.

Writing is usually used in formal situations, thus, it utilizes formal language which is reflected to vocabulary and also grammar. Swan (2005), gave some examples of using phrasal verbs such as “get up” instead of “rise” and also the avoidance of constructed auxiliary phrases like, “I have not” instead of “I haven’t” to illustrate using formal grammar in writing.

### **6.3.2. Spoken Grammar**

Spoken grammar is different from the written one (Harmer, 2001). Spoken grammar is used in informal situations and it is dissimilar from the written one. Eastwood (1994) think that in spoken grammar there are more words used and less structural clauses. More words are used in spoken grammar because the interlocutors clarify and correct what they say when they are speaking. Harmer (2001) argues that spoken grammar has its own principles and organization and its own discourse markers like interjections (oh, ah), hesitators (err, um) and so on.

According to Swan (2005), spoken grammar is used in informal situations where speakers can interrupt and complete each other utterances. Carter (2000) has argued that

spoken grammar is much more “flexible” than written grammar (p.145) because it does not obey strictly the correct rules of the language like written grammar.

## **7- Arguments for Teaching Grammar**

Some other researchers, on the other hand, focus on the assumption that teaching grammar leads to the development of foreign language learners performance. This is proved through studies researchers carried out in the classroom. For instance, Cowan (2008) has reported from Master (1994), who has proved that English learners improve article use accurately through learning grammar. Besides (Ur, *ibid*, p. 30) indicates that Widows(1979) states: “ the language teacher’s view of what constitutes knowledge of a language is...knowledge of syntactic structure of sentences...the assumption that the language teacher appears to make is that once this basis is provided, then the learners will have no difficulty in dealing with actual use of language.

Widdowson (*ibid*) would stress the significance of grammar courses to provide learners with the linguistic knowledge as a basis for language use. Moreover, Thornbury (*ibid*) suggests the following arguments in favor of the incorporation of grammar in language teaching.

### **7.1. The Sentence-Machine Argument**

In language learning, there must be what is called “item-learning” that is the memorization of individual items such as words and phrases. However, they need to learn some grammatical structures to gain ability for generating new sentences. Therefore, grammar is considered as “**sentence-making machine**” which develop learner’s linguistic creativity

## **7.2. The Fine-Tuning Argument**

Teaching grammar may function as a corrective tool against learner's ambiguous utterances and writings. It focuses on subtle meaning rather than merely language structure. For instance, the following errors are likely to confuse the readers:

**\*last Monday night I was boring in my house.**

**\*after speaking a lot time with him I thought that he attracted me.**

**\*we took a wrong plane and when I saw very later because the plane took up.**

**\*five years ago I would want to go to India but in that time anybody of my friends didn't want to go.**

## **7.3. The fossilization Argument**

Learners with high motivation may achieve amazing results of language proficiency. However, more often “pick it as you go along”. Learners, who receive no instruction, have much exposure to what is called “fossilization”. They reach a state beyond which it is very difficult to progress. Thus, grammar instruction helps learners to get rid of the language fossilization risk.

## **7.4. The Advance –Organizer Argument**

Grammar instruction might also have a delayed impact on foreign language learning. For instance, Richard Schmidt, a researcher, has Portuguese learning class. When he traveled to Brazil to develop his mastery of the language, his Portuguese progressed. In fact, as he interacted naturally with Brazilian, he was aware of certain grammatical items, which he had studied in his class. The researcher, therefore, becomes a fluent Portuguese speaker. Thus, grammar learning had an influence on his language learning. Therefore it had acted as a kind of advance organizer for his later acquisition of the language.

## **Conclusion**

Language is a form of a social behavior. Grammar is one of its basic components; it is composed of the rules that direct the formation of words and structuring of sentences. It is also composed of forms that are used to address different functions depending on the contexts where they are used. Grammar is one essential component of any language learning and any language cannot be established without learning its grammar.

Since the language is used to communicate certain ideas and communication occurs between people and among people, involving people, then, is necessary for learning grammar as a component of a language. Therefore, there are two categories of grammar, spoken and written grammar.

Teaching grammar through the communicative approach can be implemented through such approach using many activities among which group work or pair work activities that can be done cooperatively. When doing such activities, many benefits can be gained in addition to the learning of certain grammatical structures, such as how to use the language correctly and fluently in real contexts when discussing among the group members.

# chapter three

## **Field work**

### **Description and Analysis of Student's Questionnaire**

#### **Introduction**

The main objective of this research is to investigate the importance of cooperative learning technique among EFL student's in learning grammar. For this reason , we found that it is necessary to administer two main questionnaires; one for students, and one for teachers, in order to obtain data concerning the student's and teacher's opinions about the importance of group work in learning grammar effectively.

#### **Description of the Student's Questionnaire**

This questionnaire is designed to second year LMD students of the department of English at Biskra University. The questionnaire used in this research is divided into four sections of twenty one questions. It consists of open ended questions which include yes/no questions and multiple open questions and close ended questions. The first section is personal background information that aims to get general information about the participants. The second section includes student's perceptions about learning grammar; its main objective is to give students an opportunity to know their level in grammar and its importance in learning the English language. The third section deals with student's perceptions about the teacher's supervision of group work and the basis which students use when they are working in small groups also we mention student's problems when working in groups or pairs during grammar classes. The fourth and the last section include student's attitudes about using cooperative group work such as the student's feeling when they are working in groups/pairs and the importance of this technique in learning and helping students to express their thoughts, and also to learn how to speak English fluently and correctly.



## **Section One: Personal Background Information**

Section one contains six questions, it attempts to obtain general information about the participants; gender, age, and whether the choice of studying English at the university is personal or imposed, also the years of studying English, the proficiency level of student's in English, moreover, student's fluency in speaking.

## **Section Two: Student's Perceptions about Learning Grammar**

This section contains five questions. It includes the importance of learning grammar in learning English, in addition to the student's level in grammar and also if students know grammar rules but they still making mistakes when using the language. Besides it includes the value of learning grammar. This section also contains the best method of learning grammar which is used by the teacher either by giving them rules and explains them and then gives activities or by guiding the learners to get the rules by themselves and through activities or by combining the two methods.

## **Section Three: Student's Perceptions about the Teacher's Supervision of Group/Pair Work**

This section contains five questions. It deals with teacher's supervision of group work and also if the teacher checks what students do in their tasks and if he insists on them to use English to interact with each other when working in groups. In addition on what basis students are usually grouped and if they are facing some problems when working during grammar classes.

## **Section Four: Student's Attitudes about Using Cooperative Group/Pair Work**

This section contains five questions. It includes student's attitudes and their opinions about using cooperative group work; also it includes student's feeling when they work in

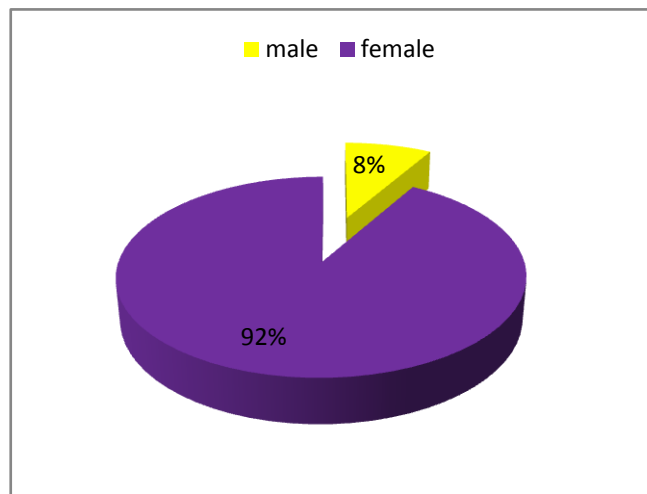
small groups, in addition the importance of working in groups such as helping each other to express their ideas and it helps learners how to speak English fluently and respecting each other.

## Section One: Background Information

### Item one: Gender

Gender	male	female	total
Number	3	33	36
Percentage	8%	92%	100%

**Table 01: Students' gender**



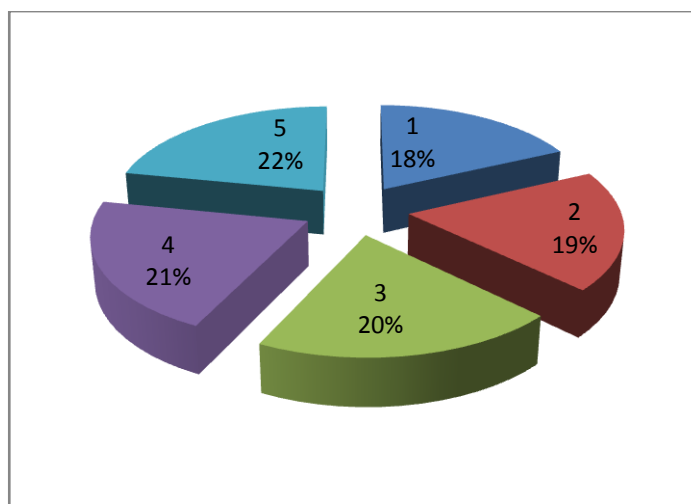
**Figure 01: Students' Gender**

This table shows that the majority of students (92%) are females and only (8%) are males because females who are likely to be more interested in learning a foreign language than males.

### Item Two: Students' Age

Age	19	20	21	22	23
Number	5	15	10	2	4
Percentage	18%	19%	20%	21%	22%

**Table 02: Students' Age**



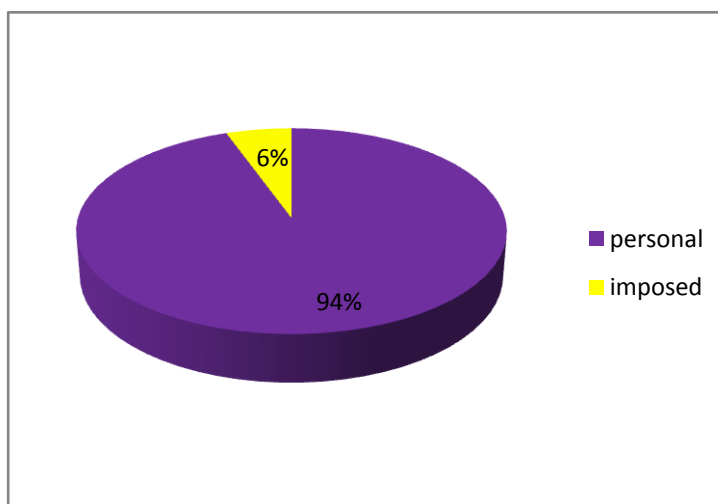
**Figure 02: Students' Age**

According to the table above; we notice that all of them are teenage students whose ages vary between 19 and 23 years old, from the total number of the sample 36. This means that our participants are active. We can also observe that, the majority of learners are 23(22%) and 22(21%) years old; 19 years old of students went to school early and never failed. However, 20 and 21 years old are regular students who went to school at a normal age and they never failed. The other ages differences between (21), (22), (23) age old can be explained by either they have repeated years or not having started early their primary education or probably they have change the field of their study.

**Item Three: Students' Choice of English**

Responses	Personal	Imposed
Number	34	2
Percentage	94%	6%
Total	36	100%

**Table 03: Students' Choice of English**



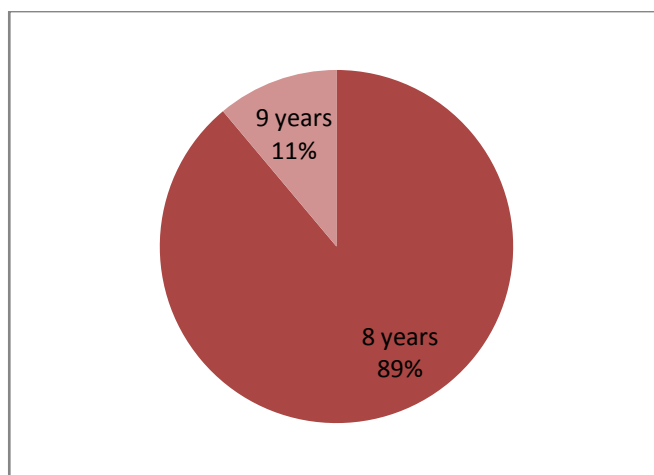
**Figure 03: Students' Choice of English**

The table above shows that the majority of students (94%) answered that their choice to study English was personal because they are interested in learning this language. Because it is the language of the world and an international one. Besides, they want to get a job or travel in order to communicate with native speakers. Also they want to become teachers of English. And they feel so comfortable and motivated when learning English as a foreign language. While (6%) are obliged to learn English as a foreign language.

**Item Four: how many years have you been studying English?**

Responses	8 years	9 years
Number	32	4
Percentage	89%	11%
Total	36	100%

**Table 04: years of Studying English**



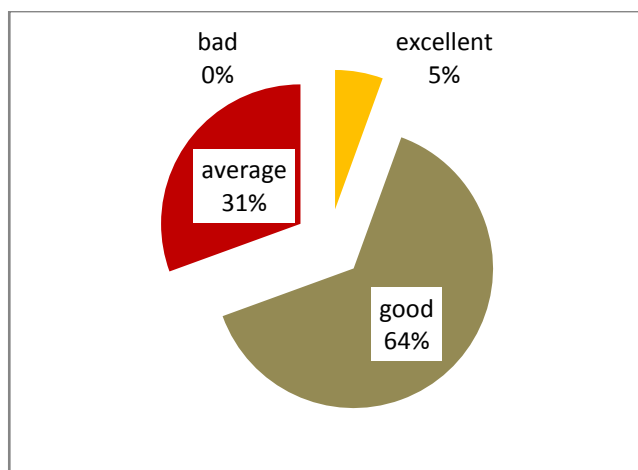
**Figure 04: years of Studying English**

It is very essential to know about the diversities in years of studying English in order to help us know for how long students have been practicing English, and to know their level in English. As the results shows that the majority of the students have been studying English for 8 years (89%) which are the students who started English in the first year at the middle school. Then, students who mentioned 9 years (11%) they have possibly repeated one year respectively.

**Item Five: Proficiency Level in English**

Responses	Number	Percentage
Excellent	2	5%
Good	23	64%
Average	11	31%
Bad	0	00%
Total	36	100%

**Table 05: Proficiency Level in English**



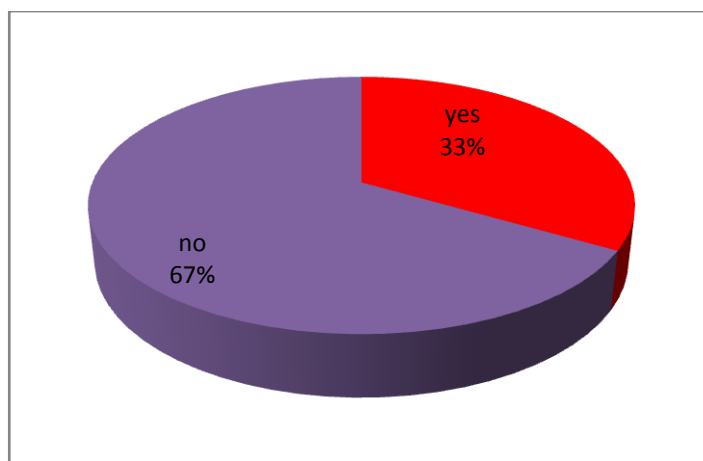
**Figure 05: Proficiency Level in English**

This table shows that the majority of students (64%) consider that their level in English is good, whereas (31%) think that their level in English is average. Others (5%) show that they are excellent in English, and none of the participants who marked (0%) consider his/her level bad in English.

**Item Six: Do you consider yourself fluent speaker? Why? Why Not?**

Responses	Yes	No
Number	12	24
Percentage	33%	67%
Total	36	100%

**Table 06: Students' Speaking**



**Figure 06: Students' Speaking**

In the table above we notice that the majority of students 24(67%) consider their selves as not fluent speakers because of:

- when they speak they feel anxious and shy.
- they have difficulties in grammar.
- they did not have enough vocabulary.
- their teachers do not support them to speak inside the classroom.

Whereas, the others 12(33%) consider their selves as fluent speakers because of:

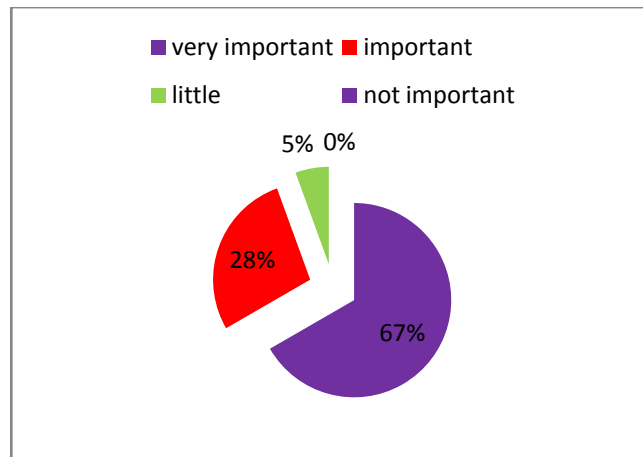
- they have self-confidence in their ideas.
- they always practice speaking inside and outside the classrooms and they interact with native speakers.

## **Section Two: Student's Perceptions about Learning Grammar**

**Item Seven: When learning the English language, do you think that learning grammar is:**

Responses	Number	Percentage
Very much important	24	67%
Important	10	28%
Little	02	5%
Not important	00	0%
Total	36	100%

**Table Seven: Students' Learning Grammar**



**Figure Seven: Students' Learning Grammar**

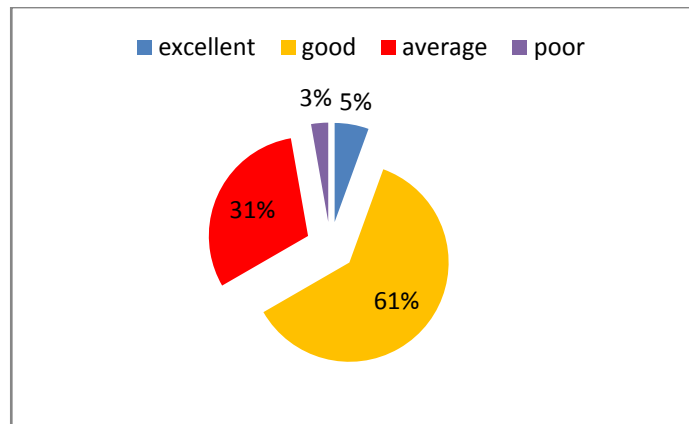
In the table above we notice that the majority of students stated that they were like to learn grammar, (67%) say that is very much important in language learning, whereas, (28%) say that it is important in EFL, however, (5%) think that grammar has a little importance.

**Item Eight: Students' Level in Grammar**

Responses	Number	Percentage
Excellent	2	5%
Good	22	61%
Average	11	31%
Poor	1	3%
Total	36	100%

**Table 08: Students' Level in Grammar**





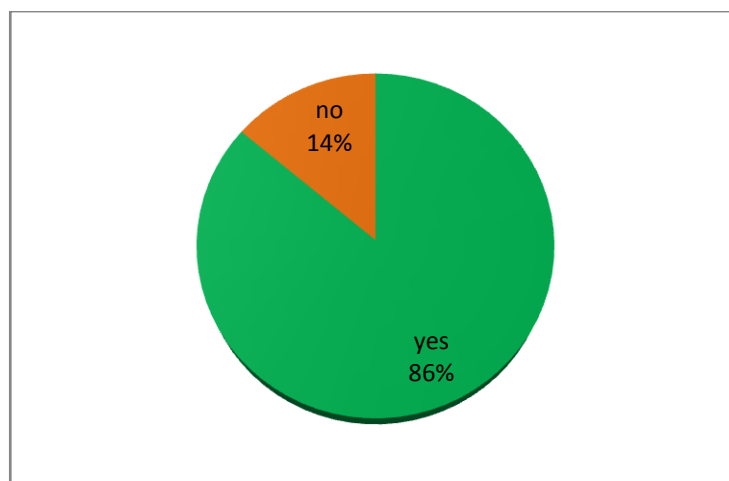
**Figure 08: Students' Level in Grammar**

This table shows that the majority of learners (61%) consider that their level in grammar is good, whereas, (31%) think that their level in grammar is average. Others (5%) of the participants are excellent in grammar because they know grammar rules, and just (3%) mentioned that they are poor in grammar, this means that they did not know grammar rules.

**Item Nine: do you often think you know grammar rules, but you still make mistakes when using the language?**

Responses	Number	Percentage
Yes	31	86%
No	5	14%
Total	36	100%

**Table 09: Students' Making Mistakes**



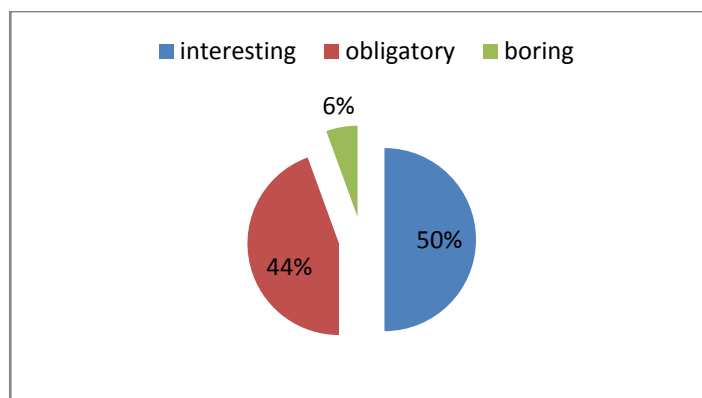
**Figure 09: Students' Making Mistakes**

the table above we notice that the majority of learners (86%) think that they know most of grammar rules, but they still making mistakes when they are using the language, and this maybe because of the lack of motivation to practice some activities and because they did not concentrate when they are expressing their ideas, whereas, (14%) think that they know all grammar rules and at the same time they did not make errors when using the language.

**Item Ten: do you think learning grammar can be:**

Responses	Number	Percentage
An interesting activity	18	50%
An obligatory activity	16	44%
A boring activity	2	6%
Total	30	100%

**Table 10: The Value of Grammar**



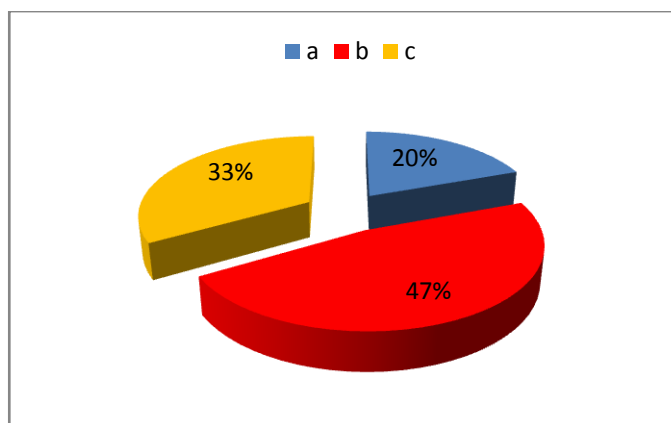
**Figure 10: The Value of Grammar**

In this table we notice that the majority of students (50%) inform that learning grammar is an interesting activity because it is very important in language learning. In addition, (44%) of the participants report that grammar is an obligatory activity because they like to learn it and they enjoy when they are doing its activities. Others (6%) say that learning grammar is a boring activity and maybe this is because of studying the same things in the same ways.

**Item Eleven: do you learn grammar better:**

Responses	Number	Percentage
When the does not give the rules, but guides them to get the rules by themselves	7	20%
When the teacher gives the rules, explains them and then gives activities	17	47%
When the teacher combines the two methods	12	33%
Total	36	100%

**Table 11: Students' Best Ways of Learning Grammar**



**Figure 11: Students' Best Ways of Learning Grammar**

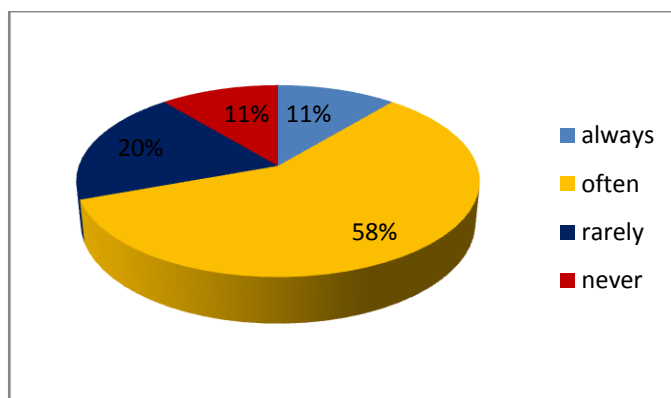
The table shows that the majority of students (47%) say that they can learn grammar better when the teacher gives them the rules, explains them and gives activities. However, (20%) stated that they learn grammar well when the teacher does not give the rules, but guides them to get the rules by themselves through activities. Whereas, (33%) of the participants say that they prefer to combine the two methods in order to learn grammar better.

### **Section Three: Students' Perceptions about the Teacher's Supervision of Group/ Pair Work**

**Item Twelve: how often does your teacher ask you to work in small groups?**

Responses	Number	Percentage
Always	4	11%
Often	21	58%
Rarely	7	20%
Never	4	11%
Total	36	100%

**Table 12: Students' Working in Groups**



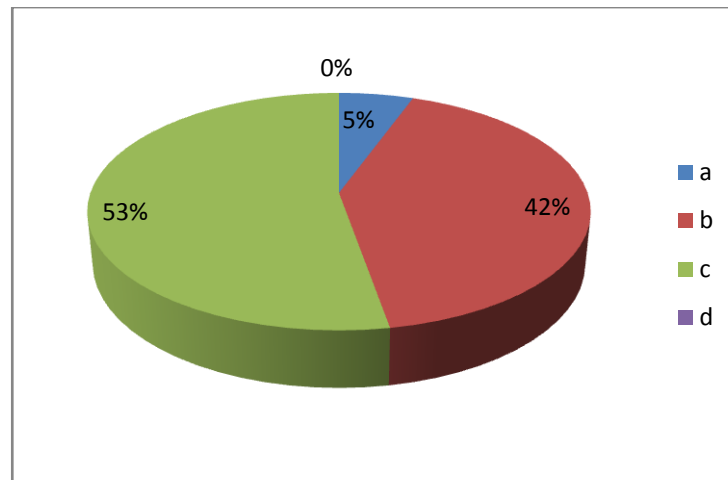
**Figure 12: Students' Working in Groups**

The table shows that the majority of students (58%) report that they use group/pair work in the grammar class often, however, (20%) say that their working in groups is rarely and this because of the teacher. Whereas, just (11%) inform that they always use group work because of teacher's motivation. Others (11%) report that they never use group/pair work to learn grammar.

**Item Thirteen: when you work in small group/pair, on what basis students are usually grouped?**

Responses	Number	Percentage
* students with the same level together	02	5%
* students sitting with each other together	15	42%
*students choose their partners	19	53%
*others	00	0%
Total	36	100%

**Table 13: Students' Basis of Group Work**



**Figure 13: Students 'Basis of Group Work**

In this table we notice that the majority of students (53%) say that they prefer to choose their partners why they are working in small groups. Whereas, (42%) say that they like to work with their mates who are sitting with each other together. Moreover, (5%) report that they like to work with their mates of the same level together. Here we ask them to specify other ways of grouping students such as:

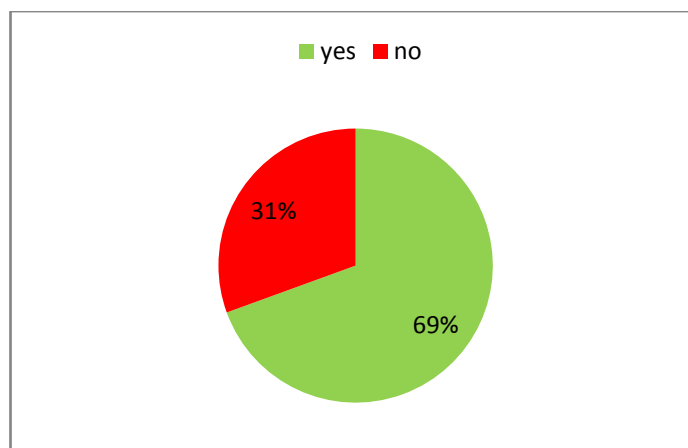
-They work with their partners to feel relax and express their ideas fluently.

-They inform to work in groups of the same gender in order to understand each other.

**Item Fourteen: does your teacher check if students are doing the tasks?**

Responses	Number	Percentage
Yes	25	69%
No	11	31%
Total	36	100%

**Table 14: Teachers' Supervision of Students' Tasks**



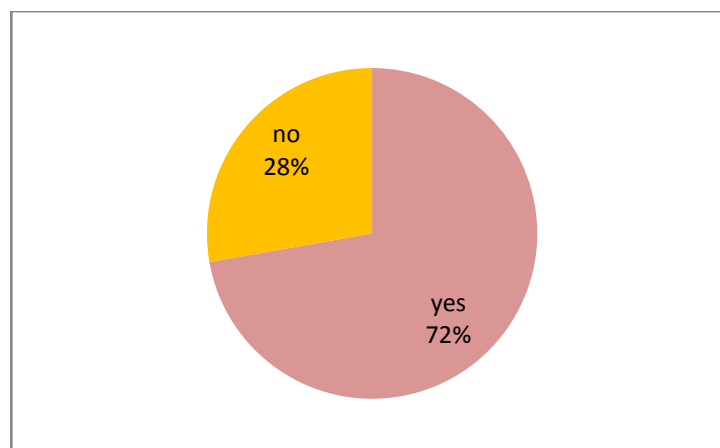
**Figure 14: Teachers' Supervision of Students' Tasks**

The table shows that the majority of students (69%) report that their teachers control them when they are doing their tasks or working in groups. Whereas, (31%) of them report that their teachers do not check if they are working or not. Moreover, teachers should not just control students if they are working but, they must mention students' problems when working in groups.

**Item Fifteen: does your teacher insist on using English to interact with each other when working in small groups?**

Responses	Number	Percentage
Yes	26	72%
No	10	28%
Total	36	100%

**Table 15: students' using English to interact with each other**



**Figure 15: students' using English to interact with each other**

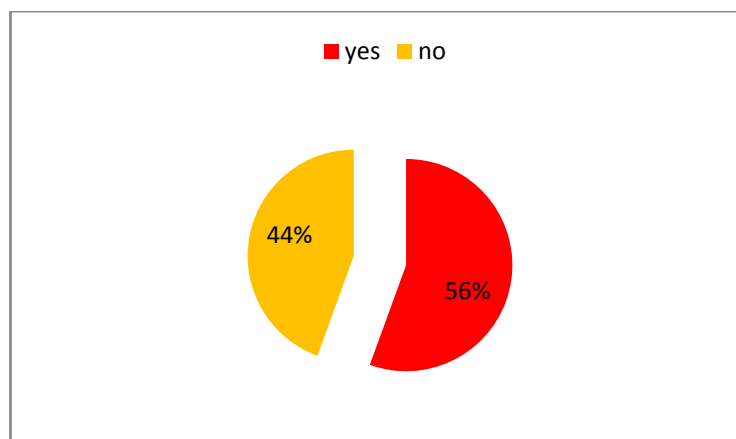
The table shows that the majority of learners (72%) inform that their teachers do not insist on using English to interact with each other when working in groups . whereas, the minority (28%) say that their teachers ask them to use English in order to communicate, exchange and discuss ideas when they are working in groups.

**Item Sixteen: do you face problems working in pairs or groups grammar classes?**

Responses	Number	Percentage
Yes	20	56%
No	16	44%
Total	36	100%

**Table 16: students' problems when working in groups**





**Figure 16: students' problems when working in groups**

The table above shows that the majority of students (56%) report that they are facing such problems when they are working in groups or pairs during grammar classes and this because of:

- they find difficulties to express their ideas to the members of the group.
- they do not like when their mates correct their mistakes.
- they have not enough opportunities to speak with their group mates.

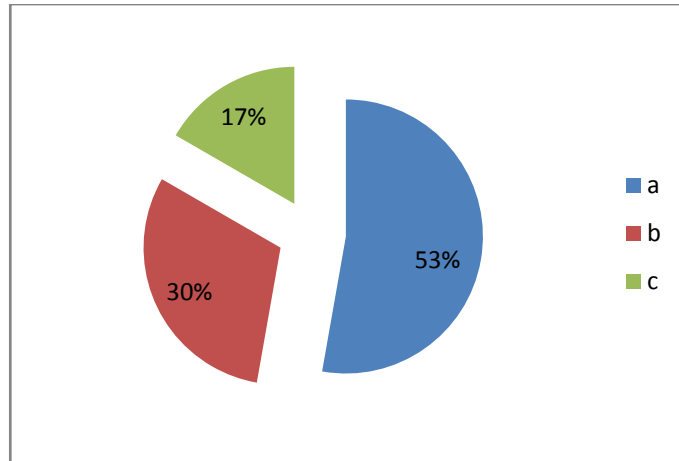
Whereas, (44%) inform that they have not problems when working in groups.

#### **Section Four: Student's Attitudes about Using Cooperative Group Work.**

**Item Seventeen: when learning grammar in class, do you prefer:**

Responses	Number	Percentage
*to work individually	19	53%
*to work in pair	11	30%
*to work in small group	6	17%
Total	36	100%

**Table 17: Students' Best Ways of Learning Grammar**



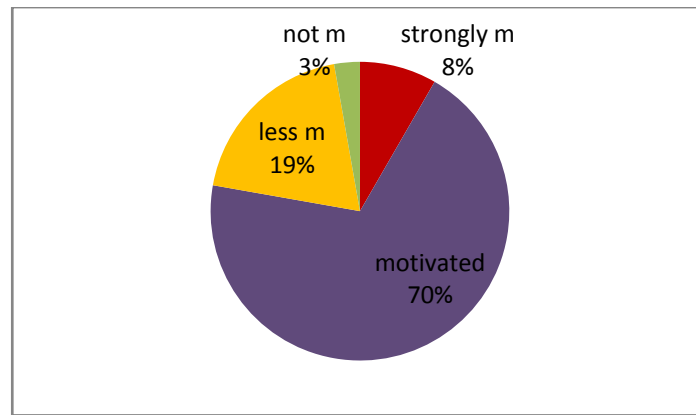
**Figure 17: Students' Best Ways of Learning Grammar**

the table above shows that the majority of students (53%) say that they prefer to work individually when they are learning grammar, whereas, (30%) say that they prefer pair work, and (17%) inform that they prefer to work in small groups of four or five students.

**Item Eighteen: when you work in small groups, do you feel that you are:**

Responses	Number	Percentage
Strongly motivated	3	8%
Motivated	25	70%
Less motivated	7	19%
Not motivated	1	3%
Total	36	100%

**Table 18: Students' Feeling when Working in Groups**



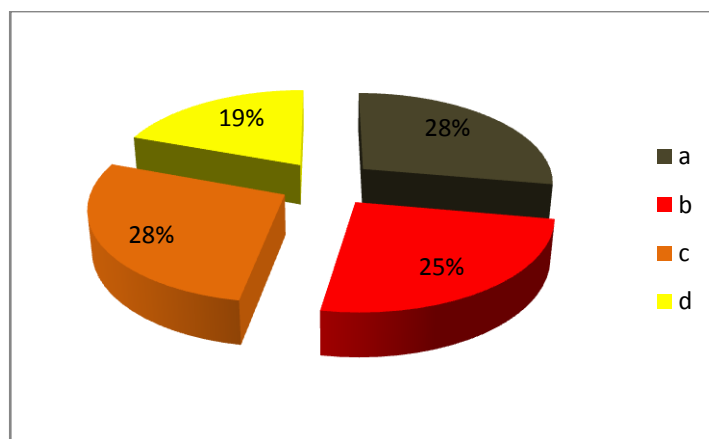
**Figure 18: Students' Feeling when Working in Groups**

In this table we notice that the majority of our participants (70%) stated that they feel motivated when they are working in small groups. However, (8%) inform that they feel strongly motivated when using groups. Whereas, (19%) say that they feel less motivated and others (3%) think that they feel not motivated at all when they are working in small groups.

**Item Nineteen: do you think that this way of learning helps you:**

Responses	Number	Percentage
To learn to respect others	10	28%
To learn to express yourself	9	25%
To learn how to speak English correctly	10	28%
To learn how to speak English fluently	7	19%
Total	36	100%

**Table 19: the Importance and the Help of Group Work in Learning**



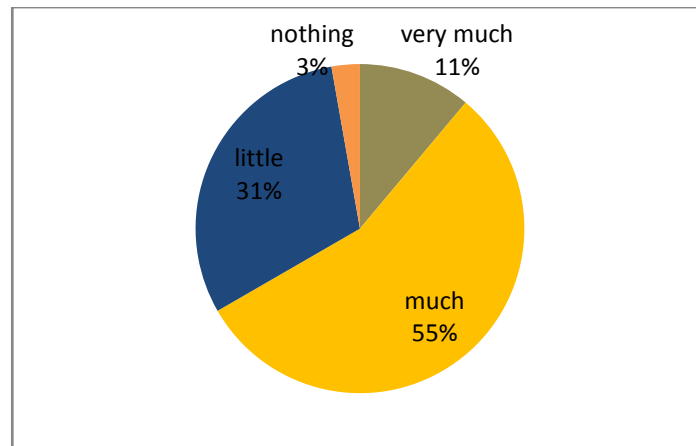
**Figure 19: the Importance and the Help of Group Work in Learning**

In the table above we notice that (28%) of learners' report that they learn to respect others when using the group work, whereas, (25%) say that group work helps them to express themselves. However, (28%) say that group work encourages them to speak English correctly and (19%) inform that group work helps them to speak English fluently.

**Item Twenty: how much do you learn from group work?**

Responses	Number	Percentage
Very much	4	11%
Much	20	55%
Little	11	31%
Nothing	1	3%
Total	36	100%

**Table 20: Students' Learning from Group Work**



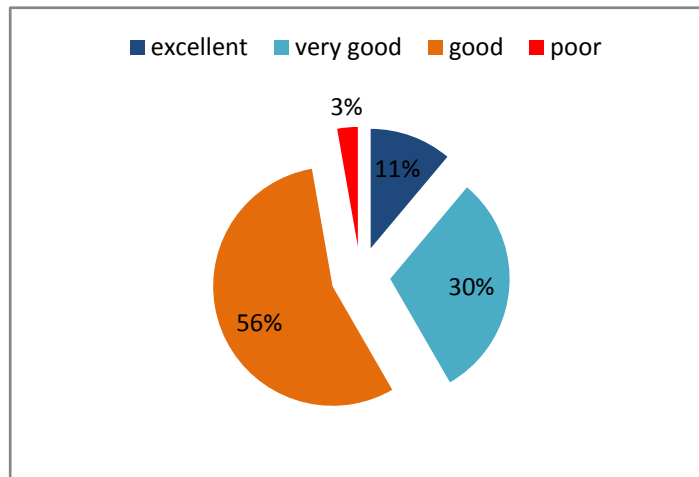
**Figure 20: Students' Learning from Group Work**

The table above shows that (11%) of the students inform that they learned from group work very much. In addition, (55%) say that they learned much from the group work, and (31%) say that they learned a little when they are using groups or pairs. Whereas, (3%) report that they learned nothing from group work.

**Item Twenty One: according to you, group work as opposed to individual work is:**

Responses	Number	Percentage
Excellent	4	11%
Very good	11	30%
Good	20	56%
Poor	1	3%
Total	36	100%

**Table 21: the value of group work as opposed to individual work**



**Figure 21: the value of group work as opposed to individual work**

The table shows that (11%) of our participants report that group work is excellent if we compare it with individual work. In addition, (30%) say that group work is very good in learning rather than individual work. However, the majority of students (56%) think that group work is good for learners then the individual work and the minority (3%) think that group /pair work is poor if we compare it with individual learning.

### **Interpretation of Results**

In background information, the student's responses reveal that the chosen sample (36) contains more females (92%) than males (8%). This may be due to the fact that females are more interested in learning a foreign language than males. The learner's answers show that all of them are teenage students whose ages are between 19 and 23 years old. Also student's responses about their choice to study English shows that the majority of them (94%) stated that their choice to study English was imposed because they are interested in and it is the language of the world, and (6%) they are obliged to study it. Concerning the years of studying English student's answers that the majority (89%) of them have been studying English for 8 years, and this maybe because they succeed in their studies, whereas, (11%)of students who mentioned that they have been studying English for 9 years because they repeated one year. The student's level also, lets us to investigate that

the most of them stated that their level in English is between good (64%) and average (31%).also student's answers shows that they did not consider their selves as fluent speakers because they did not have enough vocabulary and because they feel anxious and shy when they are speaking.

Concerning part two which is about student's perceptions when learning grammar, which includes that the majority of the students (67%) think that learning grammar is very much important. Whereas, (28%) think that learning grammar is important. In addition, most of students also think that their level in grammar is between good (61%) and average (31%), and others (5%) stated that they are excellent in grammar. moreover, most of students (86%) answers that they know most of grammar rules, but they still making mistakes when they are using the language and this due to the lack of motivation to practice some activities. Also student's responses inform that the majority of them (50%) think that learning grammar is an interesting activity because it is very important in language learning, whereas, (44%) say that learning grammar is an obligatory activity because they enjoy when using its activities. The majority of the learners (47%) indicates that they can learn grammar better when the teacher gives the rules, explain them and then gives activities, whereas, (33%) of them represents that they prefer to learn grammar better when the teacher does not give the rules, but guides them to get the rules by their selves and this through doing such activities.

Concerning the third part which is the student's perceptions about the teacher's supervision of group work and it includes the frequency of using groups when learning grammar, here students mentioned that (58%) of them using groups often and (11%) stated that they are using group work always in order to learn grammar effectively. In the other hand, the majority of our participants (53%) say that they prefer to choose their partners when they are working in small groups, (42%) stated that they like to work with their

mates who are sitting with each other together. moreover, most of the learners (69%) say that their teachers control them when they are working and check their activities, but (31%) of them answer that their teachers do not control them at all when they are doing their tasks. In addition to this, student's responses show that the teacher ask them to use English to interact and exchange ideas with each other when they are working together (72%). Whereas, (28%) of them say that their teachers do not insist on using English to discuss when working in groups. Most of second language learners (56%) face some problems when working in pairs or groups during grammar classes and this maybe because they have not enough opportunities to speak with their group mates. (44%) of them say that they did not face any problem when using groups.

Concerning part four which is titled as student's attitudes about using cooperative group work this includes the way which is preferred by students when they are learning grammar and they mentioned that (53%) of them they prefer to work individually, but (30%) of them say that they prefer pair work. moreover, the majority of learners (70%) of the whole participants stated that they feel motivated when they are working in small groups, however, (19%) of them inform that they feel less motivated. Also (28%) of them report that this way of learning which is group work helps them to respect others and it encourages them to speak English correctly. Whereas, (25%) of our participants say that group work helps them to express themselves. High percentage of students (55%) stated that they learned much from the group work, and (31%) of them say that they learned a little. whereas, (3%) report that they learned nothing from cooperative group. In addition, the majority of learners (56%) think that group work is good for them rather than the individual work. But (30%) stated that they prefer to in groups also then the individual work.



## **Description and Analysis of Teacher's Questionnaire**

### **Introduction**

The questionnaire was given to six teachers of grammar in the department of English at the University of Biskra. The selection of this sample was based on the consideration that the teachers of grammar have the experience that makes their suggestions valuable for our research.

### **Description of the Teachers' Questionnaire**

This questionnaire is designed to the teachers of grammar in the department of English at Biskra University. The questionnaire used in this research is divided into four sections of seventeen questions. It consists of open-ended questions which include yes/no questions and multiple open questions and close-ended questions. The first section is personal background information that aims to get general information about the participant. The second section include teacher's perceptions of student's learning grammar; its main objective is to give teachers an opportunity to know their students level in grammar and its value and importance in learning the English language, also to know which method of teaching that is used by the teachers when they are teaching grammar. The third section deals with the teacher's incorporation of cooperative group work. It includes teachers' frequency of using group work when they are teaching grammar and also the number of students in each group and the basis on what teachers focus when using the groups. The fourth and the last section include teacher's evaluation of cooperative learning, here we mention if students have problems when working in groups during grammar classes and the importance of group in enhancing student's participation, and also the student's feeling when using cooperative learning.

### **Section One: Personal Background Information**

Section one contains two questions; it attempts to obtain general information about the participants degree and the experience of teaching grammar module.

### **Section Two: Teacher's Perceptions of Students Learning Grammar**

This section contains six questions; it includes the value and the importance of grammar in learning o foreign language, in addition to the student's level in grammar and also if students understand grammar rules, but they still making mistakes when using the language besides it includes the best method of teaching grammar that is used by teachers and also it contains that the time which is advocated for teaching grammar module is not sufficient for the learners to cover a great number of activities, moreover, it contains the frequency of activities that students can practice in the classroom.

### **Section Three: the Teachers' Incorporation of Cooperative Group Work**

This section contains six questions. It deals with teacher's frequency of using group work when they are teaching grammar, also the number of students in each group. In addition to the teacher's basis of grouping students and also if the teacher control what students do in their tasks and if he/she emphasized on using English to interact with each other when working in groups.

### **Section Four: Teachers' Evaluation of Cooperative Learning**

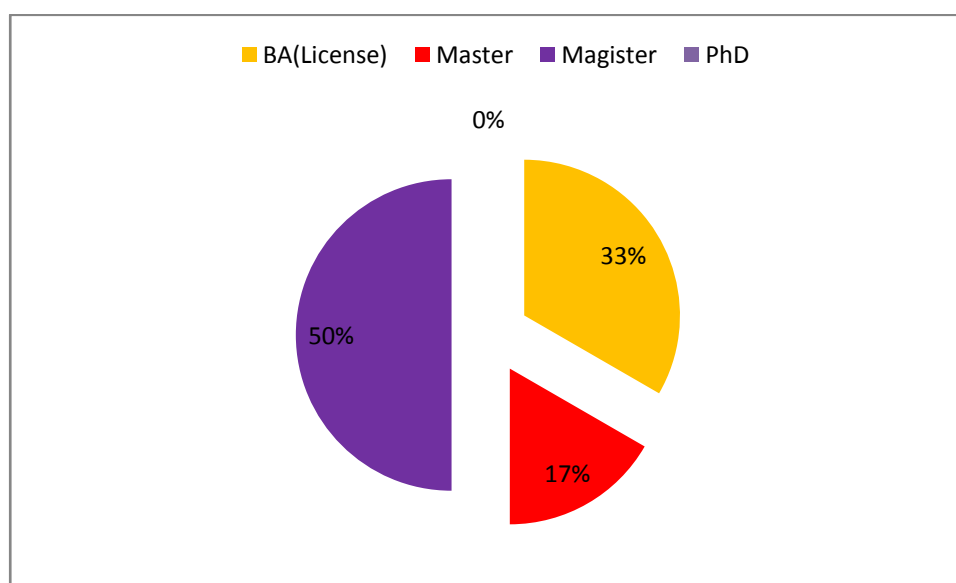
This section contains three questions. It includes students' feeling when they work in small groups also it includes the importance of cooperative group work in enhancing students participation and also if students have some problems when they are working together.

## Section one: Personal Information

### Item one: Degree

Responses	Number	Percentage
BA(License)	2	33%
Master	1	17%
Magister	3	50%
PhD(Doctorate)	0	0%

**Table 01: teacher's degree**



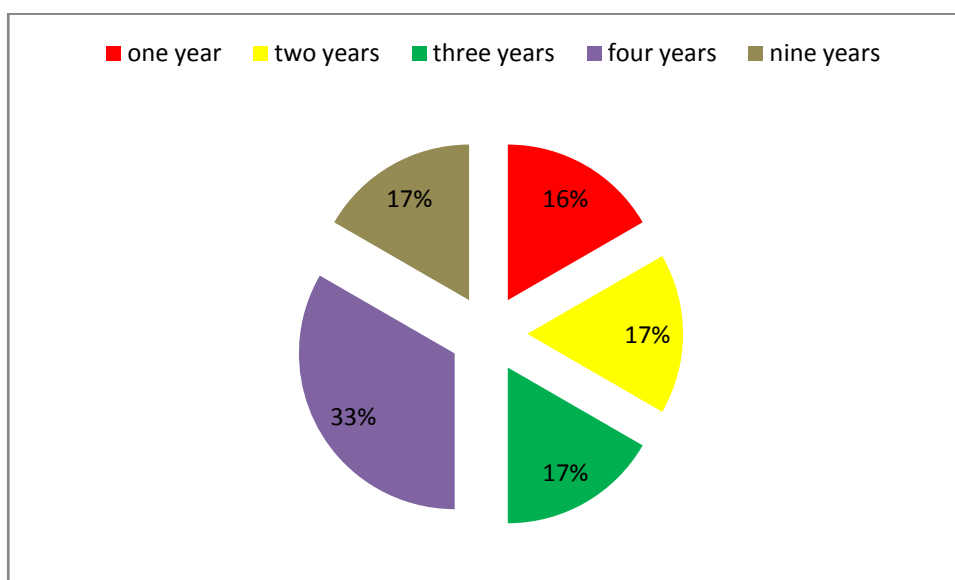
**Figure 01: teacher's degree**

The table above shows that the majority of our teachers (50%) hold Magister degree, whereas (33%) who hold BA (License) degree, and (17%) of them they hold Master degree, and no one of them have PhD (Doctorate) degree.

### Item two: how long have you been teaching grammar?

Responses	Number	Percentage
One year	1	16%
Two years	1	17%
Three years	1	17%
Four years	2	33%
Nine years	1	17%
Total	6	100%

**Table 02: years of teaching grammar**



**Figure 02: years of teaching grammar**

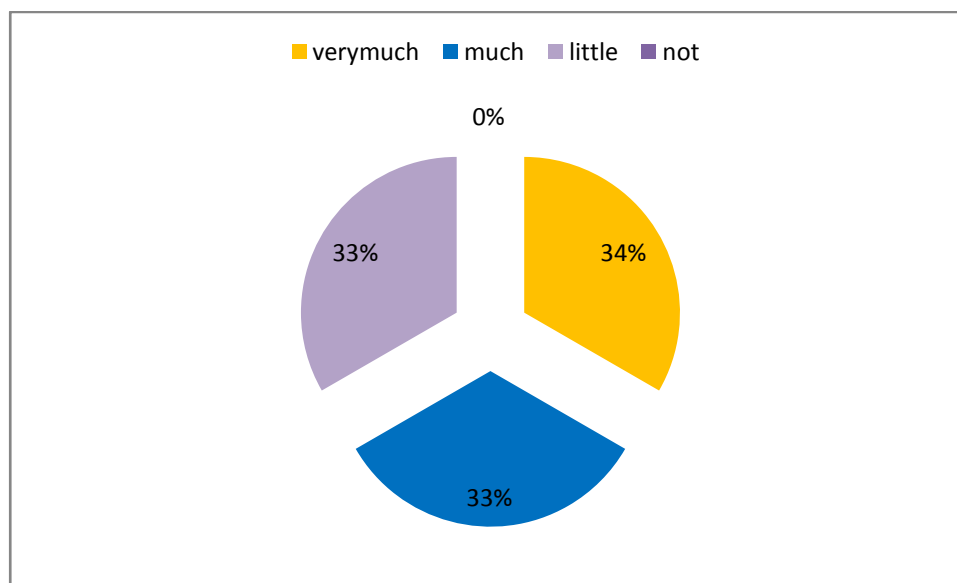
We can notice from the results shown above that teachers have a long teaching experience (33%), since he/she has spent 9 years of teaching grammar, and we notice that two teachers have 4 years of experience in teaching grammar (17%), however, just one teacher who has 3 years of experience in teaching grammar(17%). in addition, we notice that one teacher who have 2 years of teaching(17%) and also just one teacher who have teaching grammar for one year(16%).

## Section two: Teacher's Perceptions of Students' Learning Grammar

**Item three: to what extent do you think your students value the importance of grammar in learning a foreign language?**

Responses	Number	Percentage
Very much	2	34%
Much	2	33%
Little	2	33%
Not important	0	0%
Total	6	100%

**Table 03: the importance of grammar in learning a foreign language**



**Table 03: the importance of grammar in learning a foreign language**

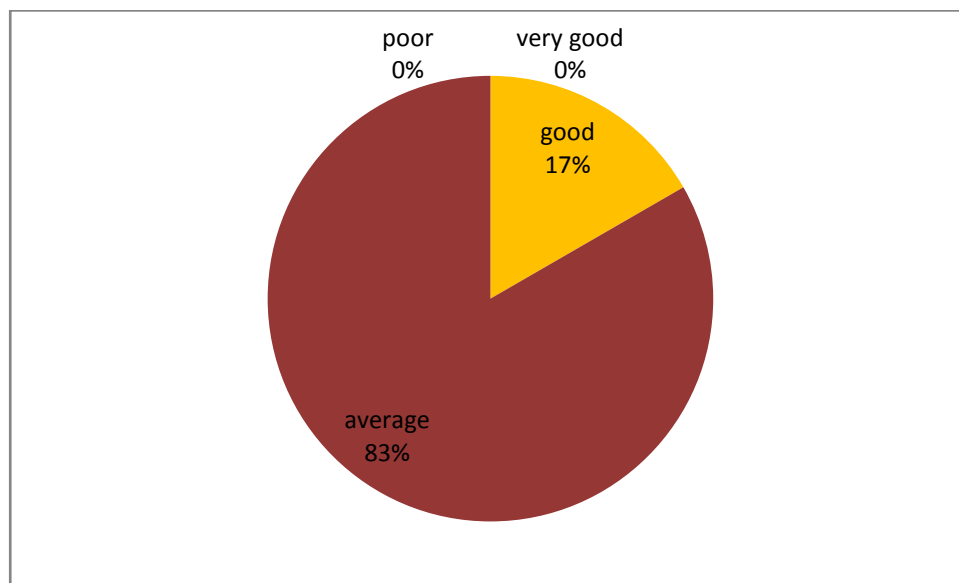
The table shows that the majority of our teachers (34%) think that their students value the importance of grammar very much when they are learning a foreign language, whereas, (33%) of them say that students value the importance of learning grammar much in

learning a foreign language. However, (33%) of them think that their students learn grammar a little because it has a little importance in learning a foreign language.

**Item four: how do you consider your student's level in grammar?**

Responses	Number	Percentage
Very good	0	0%
Good	1	17%
Average	5	83%
Poor	0	0%
Total	6	100%

**Table 04: student's level in grammar**



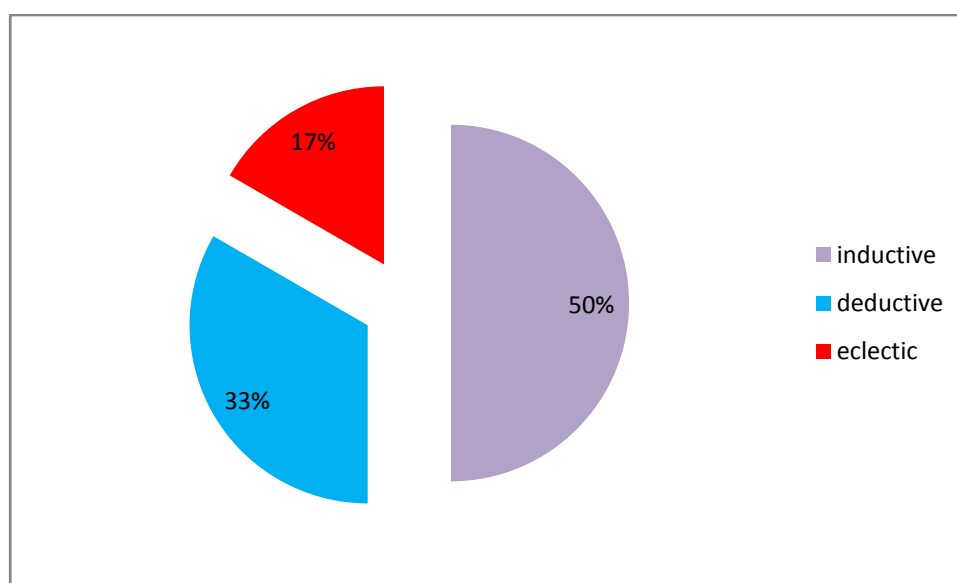
**Figure 04: student's level in grammar**

In this table we notice that the majority of teachers (83%) stated that their student's level in grammar is average. Whereas, (17%) of them say that their student's level in grammar is good.

**Item five: which method do you use when teaching grammar?**

Responses	Number	Percentage
Inductive	3	50%
Deductive	2	33%
Eclectic	1	17%
Total	6	100%

**Table 05: teacher's method when teaching grammar**



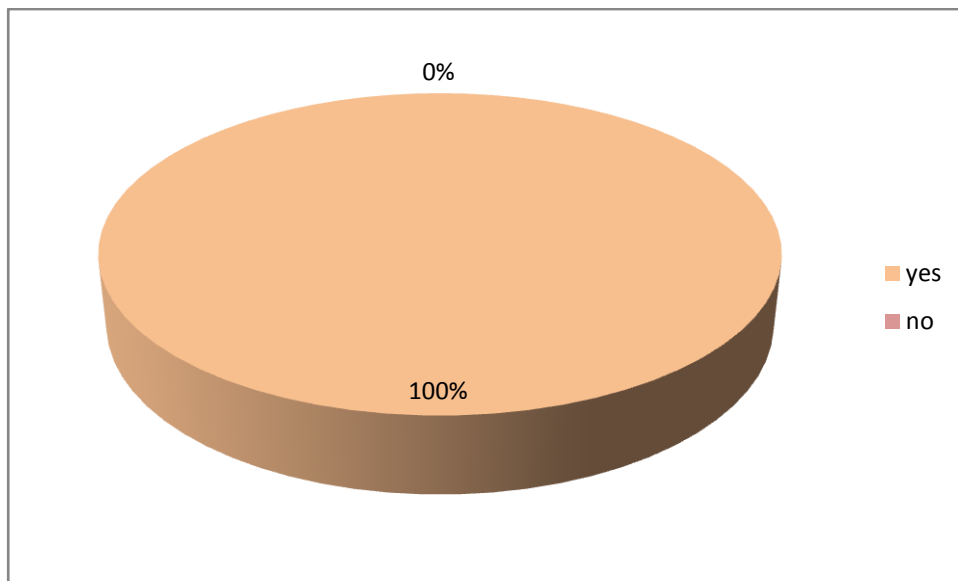
**Figure 05: teacher's method when teaching grammar**

The majority of teacher's (50%), which consists of 3 teachers, use the inductive method when they are teaching grammar and only 2 teachers who states that they used the deductive method (33%), in teaching grammar and they choose this method in order to save time. however, just one teacher who says that he/she uses the eclectic method in teaching grammar module.

**Item six: do your students understand grammar rules, but they still make errors when using the language?**

Responses	Number	Percentage
Yes	6	100%
No	0	0%
Total	6	100%

**Table 06: student's making mistakes**



**Figure 06: student's making mistakes**

The table shows that all of our teachers (100%) stated that the learners understand most of grammar rules, but they still making mistakes when they are using the language.

**Item seven: is the time advocated for teaching grammar sufficient to cover great number of activities?**

Responses	Number	Percentage
Yes	0	0%
No	6	100%
Total	6	100%

**Table 07: the time advocated for teaching grammar**





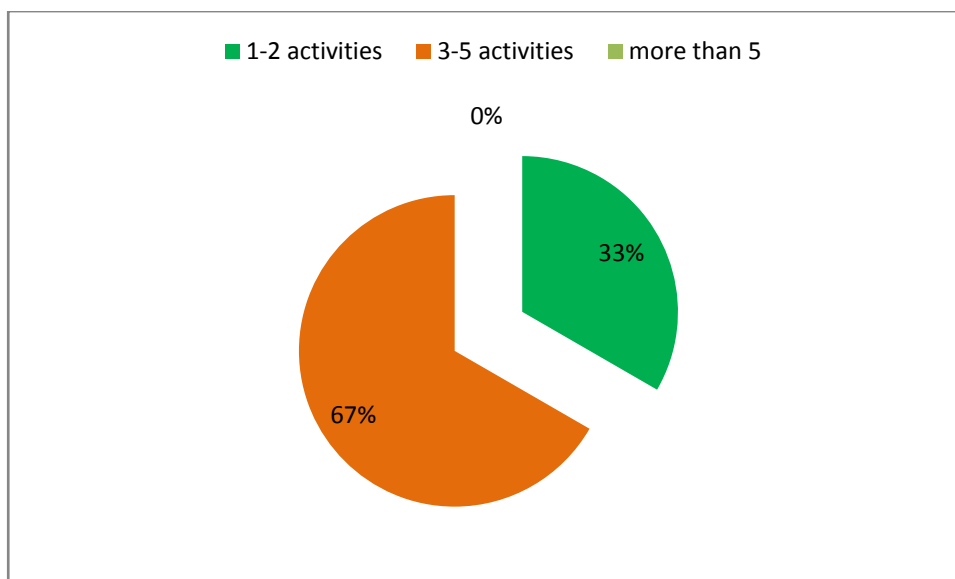
**Figure 07: the time advocated for teaching grammar**

All second year teachers of grammar (100%) stated that the time which is advocated for teaching grammar module is not sufficient for the learners to cover a great number of activities in the classroom.

**Item eight: how many activities do your students practice in the classroom?**

Responses	Number	Percentage
1-2 activities	2	33%
3-5 activities	4	67%
More than 5	0	0%
Total	6	100%

**Table 08: the activities that student's practice in the classroom**



**Figure 08: the activities that student’s practice in the classroom**

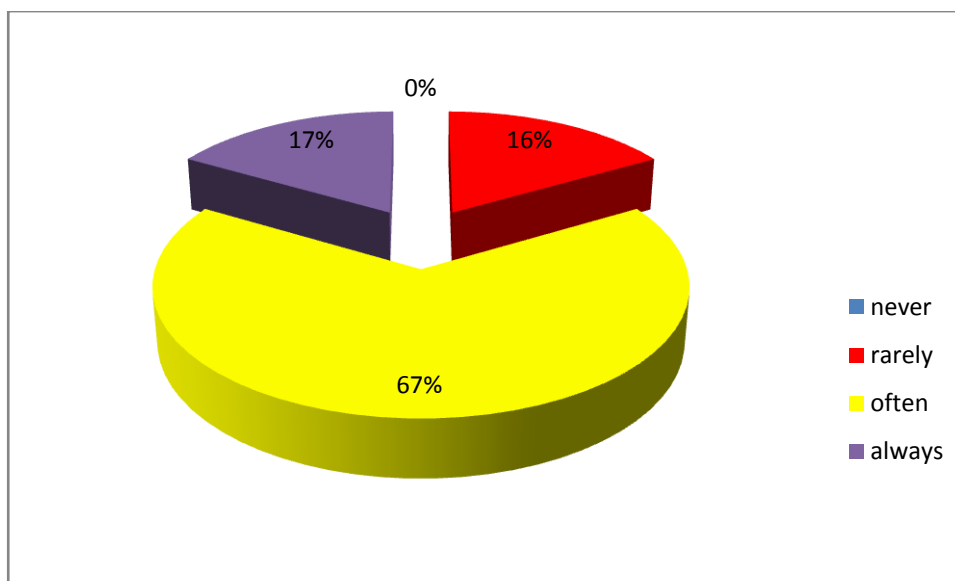
The majority of our teachers (67%) say that the students practice from 3 to 5 grammar activities inside the classroom, whereas, others (33%) say that their students can do just 1 or 2 activities during the lesson and no one can practice more than 5 activities because of the time.

### **Section three: the Teacher’s Incorporation of Cooperative Group Work**

**Item nine: how often do you use group work when teaching grammar?**

Responses	Number	Percentage
Never	0	0%
Rarely	1	16%
Often	4	67%
Always	1	17%
Total	6	100%

**Table 09: the frequency of using group work when teaching grammar**



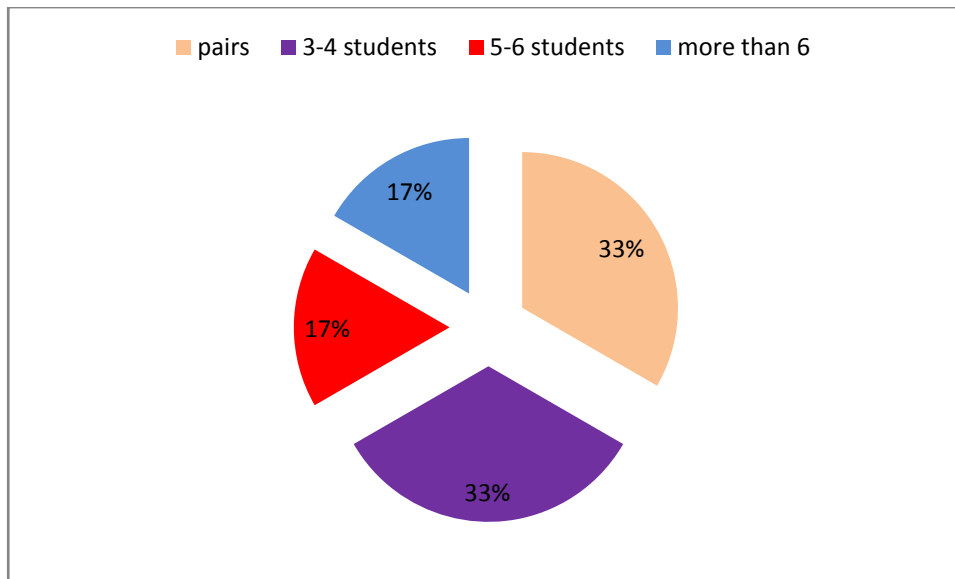
**Figure 09: the frequency of using group work when teaching grammar**

A great number of teachers (67%) who stated that they used group work often when they are teaching grammar module. However, (17%) of them stated that they used it always when they are teaching grammar and (16%) stated that they rarely used group work in teaching grammar.

**Item ten: how many students are there in each group?**

Responses	Number	Percentage
Pairs	2	33%
3-4	2	33%
5-6	1	17%
More than 6	1	17%
Total	6	100%

**Table 10: the frequency of students in each group**



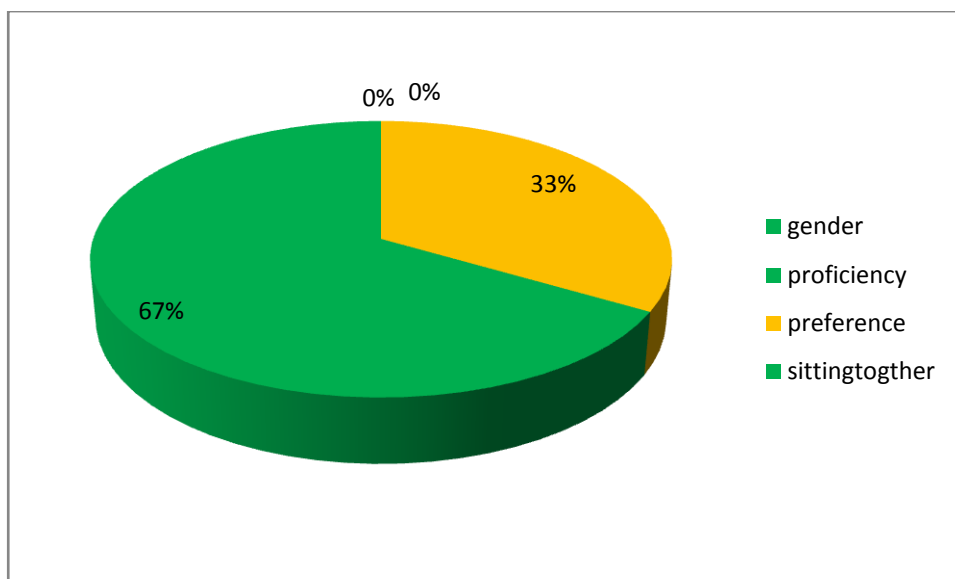
**Figure 10: the frequency of students in each group**

Most of the teachers (33%) informed that there are 3 or 4 students in each group and (33%) of them said that there are 2 students in each group or (pairs). whereas, (17%) of the participants stated that in each group we have 5 or 6 students. In addition, (17%) of them said that in each group we have more than 6 students.

**Item eleven: do you set up the groups on the basis of:**

Responses	Number	Percentage
Gender	0	0%
Proficiency	0	0%
Student's preference	2	33%
Students sitting together	4	67%
Total	6	100%

**Table 11: the basis of student's groups**



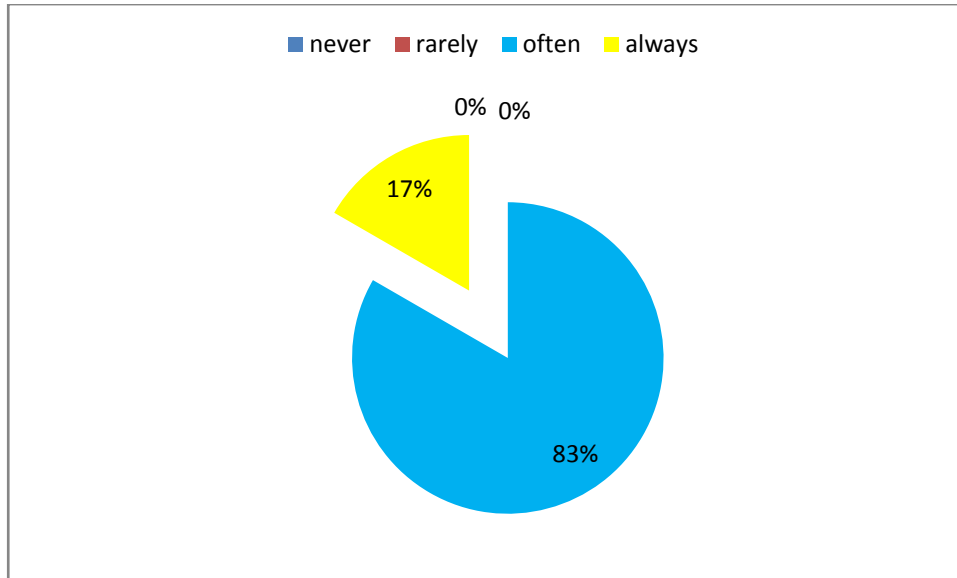
**Figure 11: the basis of student's groups**

The table above shows that the majority (67%) of the teachers stated that they set up the groups on the basis of their students sitting together, whereas, (33%) of them said that they set them on the basis of their student's preference .here we ask them to specify others if they can, and most of them said that students are grouped randomly in order to give the opportunity to exchange knowledge.

**Item twelve: how often do you check if your students are doing the activities?**

Responses	Number	Percentage
Never	0	0%
Rarely	0	0%
Often	5	83%
Always	1	17%
Total	6	100%

**Table 12: teacher's supervision of student's activities**



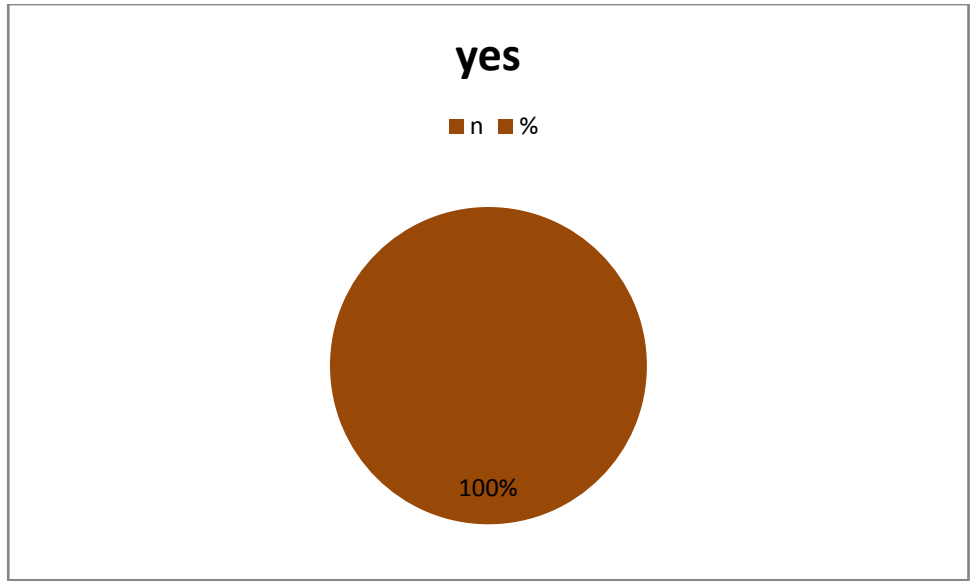
**Figure 12: teacher's supervision of student's activities**

The most of the teachers (83%) said that they often check if the students are doing the activities, however, (17%) stated that they always check if their students are doing their activities.

**Item thirteen: do you emphasize using English when students are interacting within the group?**

Responses	Number	Percentage
Yes	6	100%
No	0	0%
Total	6	100%

**Table 13: teachers' emphasis on using English in groups**



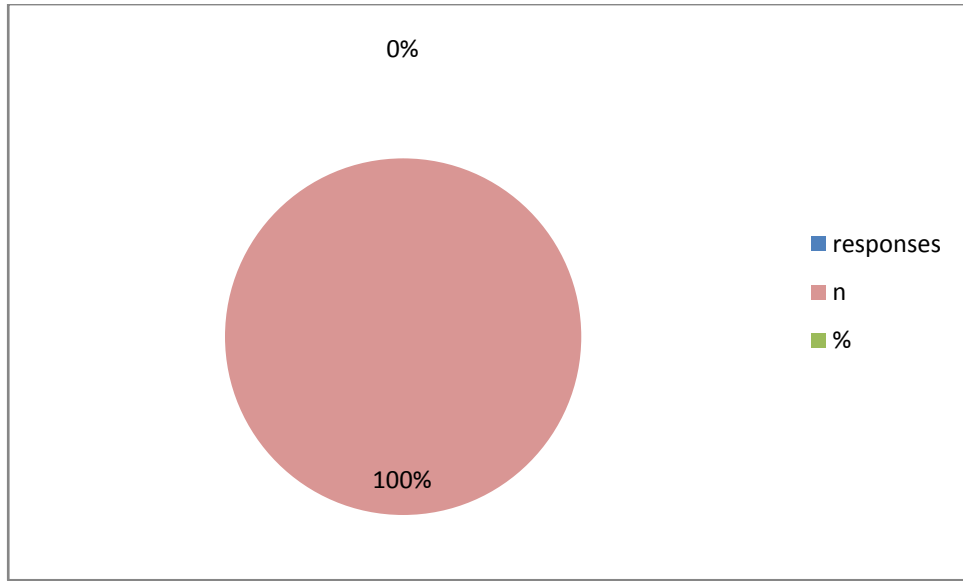
**Figure 13: teachers' emphasis on using English in groups**

The table shows that all the teachers of grammar (100%) stated that they emphasized on using English when the students are interacting with each other in their groups.

**Item fourteen: do you help students see the value of cooperative learning?**

Responses	Number	Percentage
Yes	5	100%
No	1	0%
Total	6	100%

**Table 14: teacher's supervision about the value of cooperative learning**



**Figure 14: teacher’s supervision about the value of cooperative learning**

The table above shows that all of the teachers said that they helped the students to see the value and the importance of cooperative learning in learning a foreign language.

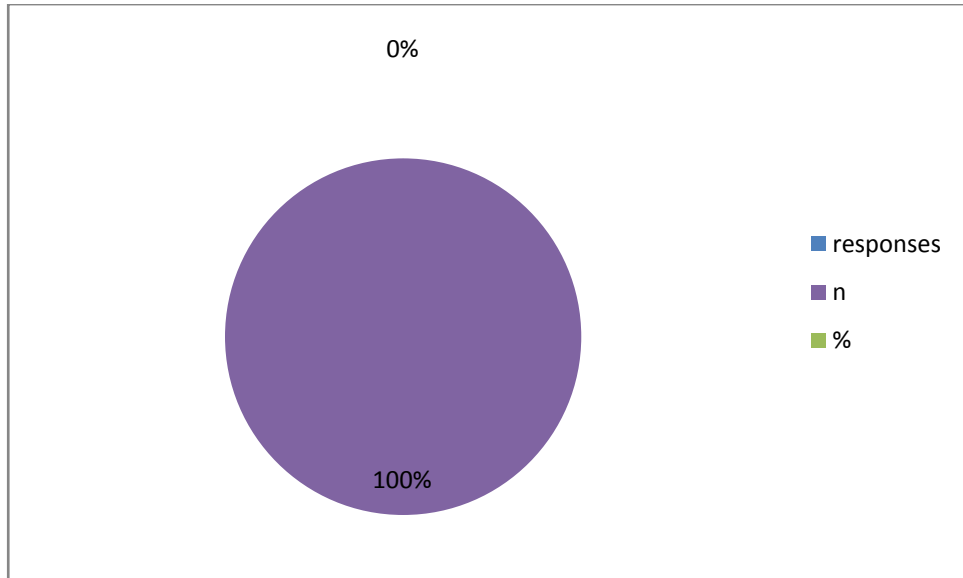
**Section Four: Teachers’ Evaluation of Cooperative Learning**

**Item fifteen: do your students have problems when they work together?**

Responses	Number	Percentage
Yes	1	0%
No	5	100%
Total	6	100%

**Table 15: teacher’s evaluation about student’s problems**





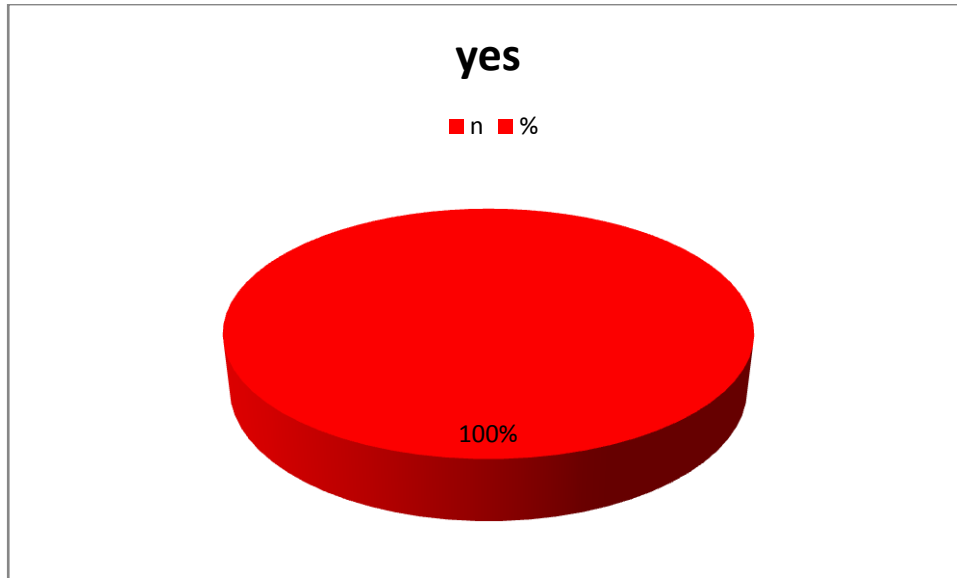
**Figure 15: teacher’s evaluation about student’s problems**

The table shows that all the teachers (100%) informed that the students did not face problems when they are working together in small groups.

**Item sixteen: does cooperative group work enhances your student’s participation?**

Responses	Number	Percentage
Yes	6	100%
No	0	0%
Total	6	100%

**Table 16: cooperative group work enhances student’s participation**



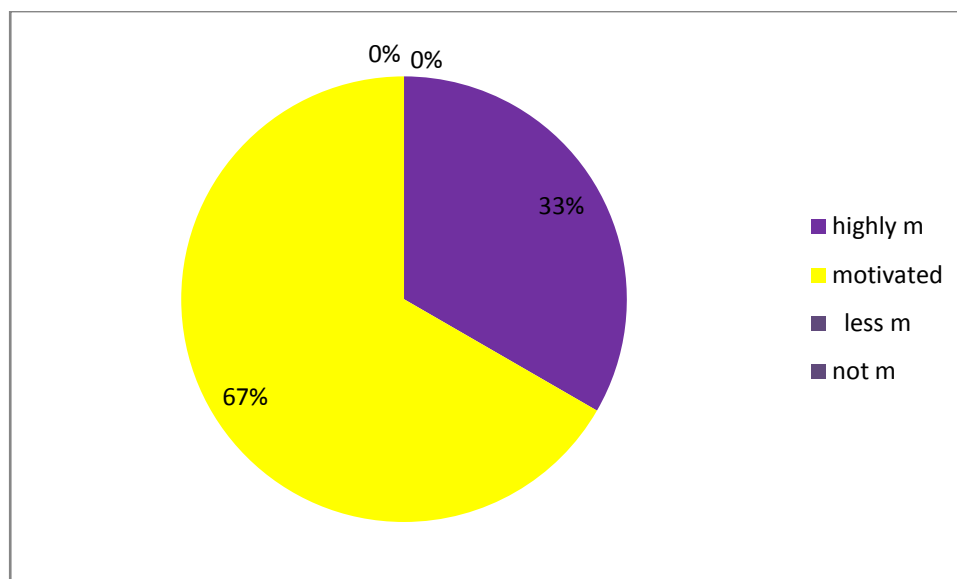
**Figure 16: cooperative group work enhances student’s participation**

(100%) of our participants said that the cooperative group work enhances their students participation in the classroom.

**Item seventeen: when using cooperative learning, do you think your students are:**

Responses	Number	Percentage
Highly motivated	2	33%
Motivated	4	67%
Less motivated	0	0%
Not motivated	0	0%
Total	6	100%

**Table 17: teacher’s evaluation of student’s feeling when using group work**



**Figure 17: teacher's evaluation of student's feeling when using group work**

The most of our teachers (67%) think that the students feel motivated when they are using the cooperative learning technique in learning a foreign language. Whereas, (33%) of them stated that the students are highly motivated when they are using cooperative group work.

### **Interpretation of Results**

According to the analysis of different items in teacher's questionnaire which reveals that most of our teachers (50%) hold Magister degree and (33%) of them hold BA (License) degree and just (17%) of them they hold Master Degree. Concerning teaching experience in grammar module, just one of them who have a long experience in teaching grammar. In addition, we notice that two teachers have also 4 years of experience in teaching grammar since 4 years. Also the majority of teachers (34%) think that their student's importance of grammar is very important. Whereas, (33%) of them say that their student's value of grammar is much important in learning a foreign language. Moreover, the majority of teachers (83%) representing that their student's level in grammar is average; whereas, the others (17%) say that their student's level in grammar is good. Concerning the method of teaching grammar, most of teachers (50%) they choose the inductive method when they are teaching grammar. However, just one of them (17%) used

the eclectic method. Moreover, all the teachers of grammar (100%) representing that their learners understand most of grammar rules, but they still making mistakes when they are using the language. (100%) of our respondents stated that the time which is advocated for teaching grammar module is not sufficient in order to cover a great number of activities in the classroom. According to the teacher's responses about the number of activities of grammar, most of them (67%) stated that the students practice from 3 to 5 activities during the lesson. Whereas, (33%) of them say that their students can do just 1 or 2 activities in the classroom and this because of time. In the other words, (67%) of our teachers say that they used the group work often when they are teaching grammar, however, (17%) of them used group work always. In addition, to the number of students in each group, most of the teachers (33%) informed that there are 3 or 4 students in each group whereas, (17%) of them stated that in each group we have 5 or 6 students and the others (17%) say that there are more than 6 students in each group. Also the majority of them (67%) stated that they set up the groups according to their sitting together, whereas, (33%) of them say that they set them according to their preferences. Moreover, the majority of teachers (83%) representing that they often check if the students are doing their activities. However, (17%) of them stated that they always check if their students are doing their activities. In addition, the teachers responses reveal that all of them (100%) say that they emphasized on using English language when the students are interacting with each other in the groups, also we notice that all of the teachers of grammar (100%) informed that they helped their students to see the value and the importance of cooperative learning strategy in learning a foreign language .and also all of them (100%) stated that the students did not face problems when they are working together in small groups. Moreover, (100%) of the teachers say that the group work enhances the student's participation in the classroom and we notice that all

our teachers (100%) think that the students feel highly motivated when they are working in groups.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter is concerned with getting real data about student's attitudes and opinions and teacher's perceptions about learning grammar, as well as, about implementing cooperative group work in teaching and learning grammar and the outcomes of this technique.

The data was gathered through two steps. The first step is the questionnaire which is administered to a small number of students. The second questionnaire is submitted to a small number of grammar teachers which aimed at checking their perceptions about using cooperative group work.

## **Pedagogical implications**

As it said before, not all group/pair works are cooperative. Group /pair work is an initial step, which in the presence of some other conditions, becomes cooperative learning. After analyzing the students' answers and the teachers' point of view, we are going to give some suggestions for using cooperative learning effectively.

First of all, many students would have some negative beliefs about group /pair work in general. To make them want to work cooperatively, teachers would state some periods of time helping them to see the value of cooperative learning.

Second, it is advisable for the teachers to use pairs or small groups, in order to help their students and manage them to work in a cooperative way with a small number of students first, and then we move to a larger number of groups. In addition, students can be given the opportunity to choose their partners who are usually the students sitting together. In doing so, learners would manipulate how to work with different people, at the same time, teachers would be aware about the type of forming groups that their students prefer.

To end with, teachers can evaluate the effectiveness of group/pair work by controlling the students' improvement at all the levels: affective, academic, and social. They can, at the time, ask their students for self-evaluation of success.

## **General conclusion**

This study aims at investigating the importance of using cooperative group work in learning grammar for EFL students at the Department of English, university of Biskra. To test this hypothesis, we divide it into two hypotheses: the first one is if teachers use cooperative group work, students will learn grammar better, and the second one is if cooperative learning can have an effect on students to learn grammar.

Our research is based on investigating these two hypotheses; we begin by section of theoretical review composed of a chapter concerning cooperative learning; its definition, characteristics, outcomes, activities and its goals.

In the second chapter, we presented theoretical literature about grammar, its definition, and the ways of teaching grammar, we distinguish between two types of grammar; spoken grammar and written grammar. Also we present the other aspects of language and we mention the different approaches and methods in teaching and also we have mentioned the arguments for teaching grammar.

The third chapter of this dissertation is devoted to the practical study which is concerned with students 'questionnaire and its results, and its discussion; and the teachers 'questionnaire, its results and discussion.

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## **Appendix A:**

### **Questionnaire for students:**

Dear students,

We would be so grateful if you could answer the following questions about your opinions concerning learning grammar and your attitudes concerning the use of cooperative group work when learning grammar.

Your answer will be very helpful for the research project we are undertaking.

We hope that you will answer with full attention, honesty and interest. To answer the questions, you are required to put a tick in the box correspondent to your answer. You may seek clarification from us whenever you feel the need for that.

Be sure that any information you will provide us with in this questionnaire will remain strictly anonymous.

#### ***Section one: Personal Background Information***

**1-Gender:**

**a-Male**

**b-Female**

**2-Age...**years old.

**3-Your choice to study English was:**

**a-Personal**

**b-Imposed**

**4-How many years have you been studying English?**

.....

**5-How is your present proficiency level of English?**

**a-Excellent**

**b-Good**

**c-Average**

**d-Bad**

**6-Do you consider yourself fluent speaker? Why? Why not?**

.....

### ***Section two: Student's Perceptions about Learning Grammar***

**7-When learning the English language, do you think that learning grammar is:**

**a-Very much important**

**b-Important**

**c-Little**

**d-Not important**

**8-Do you think your level in grammar is:**

**a-Excellent**

**b-Good**

**c-Average**

**d-Poor**

**9-Do you often think that you know most of grammar rules, but you still make mistakes when using the language?**

**a-Yes**

**b-No**

**10-Do you think learning grammar can be:**

a-An interesting activity

b-An obligatory activity

c-A boring activity

**11-Do you learn grammar better:**

a-When the teacher does not give the rules, but guides the learners to get the rules by themselves through activities

b-When the teacher gives the rules, explains them and then gives activities

c-When the teacher combines the two methods

***Section three: Student's Perceptions about the Teacher's Supervision of Group/Pair Work***

**12-How often does your teacher ask you to work in small groups/pairs?**

a-Always

b-Often

c-Rarely

d-Never

**13-When you work in small group/pair, on what basis students are usually grouped**

a-Students with the same level together

b-Students sitting with each other together

c-Students choose their partners

d-Others

-Can you specify, please

.....

**14-Does your teacher check if students are doing the tasks**

**a-Yes**

**b-No**

**15-Does your teacher insist on using English to interact with each other when working in small groups/pairs**

**a-Yes**

**b-No**

**16-Do you face problems working in pairs or groups during grammar classes**

**a-Yes**

**b-No**

-If there are other problems, can you specify please?

.....

#### ***Section Four: Student's Attitudes about Using Cooperative Group/Pair Work***

**17-When learning grammar in class, do you prefer:**

**a-To work individually**

**b-To work in pair**

**c-To work in small group**

**18-When you work in small groups/pairs, do you feel that you are:**

**a-Strongly motivated**

**b-Motivated**

**c-Less motivated**

**d-Not motivated**

**19-Do you think that this way of learning helps you**



**a-**To learn to respect others

**b-**To learn to express yourself

**c-**To learn how to speak English correctly

**d-** To learn how to speak English fluently

-If there are other benefits from working in groups, please specify

.....

**20-**How much do you learn from group work?

**a-**Very much

**b-**Much

**c-**Little

**d-**Nothing

**21-**According to you, group/pair work as opposed to individual work is:

**a-**Excellent

**b-**Very good

**c-**Good

**d-** Poor

**Thank you**

## **Appendix B:**

### **Questionnaire for Teachers:**

Dear teachers,

We would be so grateful if you could answer the following questions about your opinions concerning teaching grammar and your attitudes concerning the use of cooperative group work when teaching grammar.

Your answer will be very helpful for the research project we are undertaking.

You are required to put a tick in the box correspondent to your answer.

Be sure that any information you will provide us with in this questionnaire will remain strictly anonymous.

**Thank you**

#### ***Section one: Personal Information***

**1. Degree**

**a-** BA (License)

**b-** Master

**c-** Magister

**d-** PhD (Doctorate)

**2-**How long have you been teaching grammar?

.....

#### ***Section two: Teachers 'Perceptions of Students' Learning Grammar***

**3-**To what extent do you think your students value the importance of grammar in learning a foreign language?

**a-Very Much**

**b-Much**

**c-Little**

**d-Not Important**

**4- How do you consider your student's level in grammar?**

**a-Very good**

**b-Good**

**c-Average**

**d-Poor**

**5-Which method do you use when teaching grammar?**

**a-Inductive**

**b-Deductive**

**c-Eclectic**

**6-Do your students understand grammar rules, but they still make errors when using the language?**

**a-Yes**

**b-No**

**7-Is the time advocated for teaching grammar sufficient to cover great number of activities?**

**a-Yes**

**b-No**

**8-How many activities do your students practice in the classroom?**

a-1-2

b-3-5

c-More than five activities

**Section three: the Teachers' Incorporation of Cooperative Group Work**

**9-How often do you use group work when teaching grammar?**

a-Never

b-Rarely

c-Often

d-Always

**10-How many students are there in each group?**

a-Pairs

b-3-4

c-5-6

d-More than 6

**11-Do you set up the groups on the basis of:**

a-Gender

b-Proficiency

c-Student's preference

d-Students sitting together

If there are others, can you specify please

.....

**12-How often do you check if your students are doing the activities?**

**a-Never**

**b-Rarely**

**c-Often**

**d-Always**

**13-Do you emphasize using English when students are interacting within the group?**

**a-Yes**

**b-No**

**14-Do you help students see the value of cooperative learning?**

**a-Yes**

**b-No**

#### ***Section four: Teachers' Evaluation of Cooperative Learning***

**15-Do your students have problems when they work together?**

**a-Yes**

**b-No**

**16-Does cooperative group work enhances your student's participation?**

**a-Yes**

**b-No**

**17-When using cooperative learning, do you think your students are:**

**a-Highly motivated**

**b-Motivated**

**c-Less motivated**

**d-Not motivated**

