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**Benefits and Difficulties of Learning in Group Work in EFL
Classes**
**The Case Study of 3 rd Year Middle School Pupils Melek
Bennebi , Mecheria**

**Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfilment For the Requirement
of the Master Degree in Linguistics**

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Dedication

To the realization of this work, I thank God for everything in my life.

I dedicate this thesis to the soul of my lovely father.

I owe a great debt of gratitude and respect to my mother whose love and affection were very helpful.

I would like to thank my kids , but I need to ask for their forgiveness because of the time that I have not been with them.

I thank my husband for all his support and tolerance during the process of finishing this project.

I thank my family members for their good wishes and support.

And, I thank myself for being such a courageous woman.



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Abstract

The purpose of this present study was to find out what are the benefits and difficulties of learning in group work in EFL classes and students' opinion on the use of this technique in English classrooms. The participants of this research were 60 pupils of the third year middle school at Melek Bennebi in Mecheria, 10 current teachers and former teachers of English. The researcher collected data from students' questionnaire and teachers' interview through two phases of the study, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative methods. The result of this study shows that most students in the class prefer group work technique; they view group work as an effective learning tool. Students perceive many benefits from group work in the term of engaging the students to speak a lot, helping them to speak fluently in front of public, providing enjoyment and fun activities in students' learning process, providing an easier learning through helping each other and working together and giving an opportunity for the students to share opinions and difficulties. However, the teachers opine that group work consumes too much time, makes noises, and gives students opportunity to obtain better results when working together, creating an friendly atmosphere in which they freely express themselves, especially shy and reticent ones. My purpose is to clearly demonstrate the benefits and difficulties of learning in group work in EFL classes and then elaborating how group work positively promotes academic achievement.

Keywords: Group work, benefits of group work, difficulties of group work, students' opinion, teachers' opinion.

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List of Abbreviations

GW: Group Work

CL: Collaborative Learning

EFL: English Foreign Language

L 1: First Language

L2: Second Language

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General Introduction

General Introduction

Teachers have an important role for their students in gaining knowledge and improving their skills. In order to reach the goal, they should have a certain technique for active learning. In EFL classroom, most teachers are accustomed to applying group work technique as a cooperative learning in teaching especially in task and discussion activities. Cooperative learning is a learning system that gives opportunity for students to work together in the structured tasks. The teachers usually ask the students to work in groups or pairs, give some questions, and let them share their opinion or discussion to the class. They believe that such group activities will promote some benefits for the students to improve their ability in academic and social context.

Many researchers have claimed that group work is beneficial to L2 learners by offering many and diverse opportunities of interacting directly with the target language. Students in small groups make significantly greater improvement than those using the whole –class method on the test and on the listening comprehension scale. Communicative approach involved in group work can facilitate second language learning.

Besides the positive effects of group work activities, other researchers found some disadvantages of group work through their study. Some students prefer to work individually so that they can manage their own time and have full control of the final product.

Due to the potential of group work to facilitate and hinder students' learning process and therefore, it is interesting to find out how the students of third year middle school use group work in their classroom context. This study aimed at finding students' perceptions on the use of educational group work activity at English class. For that purpose, this study will answer the following questions:

General Introduction

1. What are the benefits and difficulties of group work?
2. How to raise teacher's awareness about using group work in teaching the EFL in middle school?
3. How to encourage students to work in group?

For these questions, the following hypotheses are proposed:

1. Learners' differences in terms of levels in English proficiency may be partly related to the fact that students have been taught by different teachers using different methods, or may be linked to psychological and social inhibitions students face, mainly the case of shy or introvert students, who despite their true competences, find no need of engaging in oral communications.

2. Bettering students' oral performance requires mainly overcoming these constraints. Involving them to work in groups is one among the best ways to reach such an aim.

3. Maybe, Learners feel more at ease when they exchange ideas and opinions in a friendly like atmosphere.

The research work is divided into two chapters the first chapter presents the literature review of the main theoretical aspect of group work, definition of group work in learning English, types of groups, group work in classroom, importance of Group Work in Learning English, the ideal size of it and the benefits and Difficulties of Group Work in learning and teaching process. Whereas the second chapter is practical. It is devoted to the description of sample population, data collection and interpretation.

Chapter One

Literature Review

Chapter One : Literature Review

1.1.Introduction

1.2. The Historical Background of Group Work

1.3.The definition of group work

1.4.Types of groups

1.4.1.Hetrogeneous Group

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1.9.Conclusion

1.1. Introduction :

This chapter deals with the theoretical aspect of this research. It presents an overview of the benefits and difficulties of learning in groups in EFL classes. This papers starts with a brief historical background of group work, definition of group work in learning English, types of groups, group work in classroom, importance of Group Work in Learning English. It also sheds light on ideal size of group work, then benefits and Difficulties of Group Work in learning and teaching process.

1 .2.The Historical Background of Group Work:

The modern cooperative learning began in the 1960's. They have in accordance with other researchers conducted studies since 1970 when they published their first notification about 9 cooperative learning. In their article, they continue to explain the research history about cooperative learning and the resistance the method encountered from the Darwinists and individualists who thought that the students should be taught to survive in a dog-eat-dog world and 'harsh individualist', do it yourself attitude. Despite this they write that co-operation is now a part of the daily environment both in the work setting and school. They explain that there exists something that is called negative social interdependence and positive social interdependence, which are tightly knit to the interaction processes in group work (Johnson &Johnson 1999). The description of positive social interdependence is when the individual student feeling that he or she can only obtain their target goal if and only if their peers (in the same group) can obtain their goals; this leads to the promoting of each other when working on a common goal. The other thing they bring up is negative social interdependence, which is when the student feels he/she cannot obtain his/her target goal because their peers (in their group) cannot reach their goals. This leads to sabotage in the group, even if it is unconscionable sabotage (Deutsch, 1949, 1962; Johnson, 1970; D. W. Johnson & R. Johnson, 1989).

1.3 .The Definition of Group Work

The concept of the grouping and pairing of learners for the purpose of achieving a learning goal has been widely researched and advocated - the term "Group work" refers to an instruction method in which learners at various performance levels

work together in small groups towards a common goal. The learners are responsible for one another's learning as well as their own. Thus, the success of one learner helps other students to be successful.

Collaborative learning is an educational approach to teaching and learning that involves groups of learners working together to solve a problem, complete a task, or create a product. CL is based on the idea that learning is a naturally social act in which the participants talk among themselves. It is through the talk that learning occurs.

In group work, learners communicate between each other and complete class work. Being defined as the one of the most important way of learner activation (Ur, 1996; Williams, & Burden, 1997), they point out the special focus that group work in foreign language learning. According to them, there are two significant reasons for this. First, group work builds many foreign language learners communication skills. Second, it assists them learn how to respectfully hold each other accountable.

Johnson (2004) questions why the use of group work is introduced and it is increasing transparently in the EFL classroom. According to her, the choice of partners or groups is significant in group work activities, and so each of learners can talk freely without teacher's control. Also, all of them are equal and free in groups.

Cohen (1994:1) states that group work refers to "students working together in a group small enough so that everyone can participate on a task that has been clearly assigned". In addition Stenaasen and Sletta (2000:25-26) define group work as "A group consists of two or more people who have a mutual influence on each other and are mutually depend on another in the sense that they have to trust each other to get their needs satisfied and achieve their goals." Therefore, the term group work is defined as a joint operation where two or more students work together to complete a project in a certain amount of time. The students use critical thinking, problem solving and each person plays a role in completing the project smoothly. The concept of group work arises from a thing called democracy. The concept of group work is a representation of a democratic government, where each member in the group has an equal saying in everything. The group works together to come up with a suitable solution and achieve goals in a sufficient amount of time (Jeffs et al., 2005).

The concept of group work is used by many teachers and college professors all over the world. The reason why teachers and college professors use group work is because it is an effective method that improves the student's ability to use critical thinking and be able to out judge and out reason why he chose that answer. The other reason is because it involves collaborative teamwork which involves the student to work amongst a group and being able to exchange ideas, so that the task is finished within a certain deadline. The concept of collaborative work is a strong aspect which is needed when the student enters the workforce and all employers look for this key factor when hiring employees. The reason that this method is used is because it develops the students' communicative skills. It helps the student to carry any barriers or shyness that he may have which is preventing him from speaking and it allows him to speak freely (Amanda, 2011).

1.5. Types of groups :

According to Ellis (1994), when used effectively, all learners and teachers benefit from group work. It encourages active learning and develops critical-thinking. But without careful planning, and facilitation, group work can frustrate learners, and teachers. It can be a waste of time. Therefore, teachers assist implement group work successfully in the classroom. They also consider carefully types of groups. There are two main types of groups that teachers use when having their students work cooperatively.

1.4.1. Heterogeneous Group

Heterogeneous group that is the first type of group means grouping learners of different ability levels together. Long (1977) states that when the learners of different levels, ages, and races cooperate closely with each other, the group work provides strong evidence for effective interaction in the classroom.

Ellis (1994) points out the benefits of heterogeneous group type. According to him, heterogeneous group requires the learners of differing ability levels and collaborating efficiently with each other, completing their tasks. In addition, heterogeneous group learners can develop deep investment in their own learning, group work.

Richards and Rodgers (2001) discuss the necessity of creating heterogeneous groups for EFL learners. They also state “Groups can be teacher-selected, random, or student-selected, although teacher-selected, is recommended as usual mode so as to create groups that are heterogeneous on such variables as past achievement, ethnicity, or sex” (p. 196). They conclude that group formation is fairly crucial in ‘successful group-based learning’ (p. 196).

1.4.2. Homogenous Group

Contrary to heterogeneous group, in homogenous group the learners are placed together that scored similarly on standardized tests (Long, 1977). For example, it appears that learners score low on their standardized tests and these learners work together in group work.

1.5. Group Work in the Classroom

Group work is a crucial way to change the pace in the classroom. It is quietly efficient as compared to the climate of traditional classroom in which teachers dictate their notes and lectures to the learners and try to put data into the minds of the learners. Therefore effective teachers comprehend the effects and outcomes of using the group work in their classes.

According to Richards and Rodgers (2001, p. 196), “Positive interdependence is created by the structure of cooperative learning tasks and by building a spirit of mutual support within the group”. They also maintain that “Group work is an important factor in creating positive interdependence”. Hence, the importance of group work in learning foreign language cannot be overlooked.

1.5.1. Group Work Activities

Richards and Rodgers (2001) state that teachers must use the most available activity depending on the size of class, the length of time, physical features of the classroom, and the nature of the group task. Group work activity is a form of cooperative learning which aims to enhance learner’s critical thinking skills, language skills and social skills. Some of the group work activities are implemented widely in classes.

1.5.1.1. Jigsaw

This activity involves learners becoming experts on one aspect of a topic, and then sharing their expertise with other (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). It increases positive educational outcomes, and it is also essential for the completion and full comprehending of the topic. The jigsaw process encourages listening and engagement by giving each member of the group a crucial role to play in the activity. Thus, it facilitates interaction among all learners in the class.

1.5.1.2. Team Practice

For this type of group learners are divided into groups at the beginning of the term (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Then learners know some of their classmates well over the course of the term. They also work cooperatively over an extended time period. After learners completing their task, they are expected to answer the questions. Finally, team practice is quite effective in unstable group (2001).

1.5.1.3. Role Play

In this activity learners are expected to act out a part. They draw their roles randomly. Each role is described and each goal demonstrates some characteristics of the role. According to Richards and Rodgers (2001), role play is an excellent activity for implementing brain storming methodology in simulations of real situation, analyzing problems from various perspectives and enhancing team work, co-operation and creative problem solving in group work. On the other hand, it assists also create awareness of role characteristics.

1.5.1.4. Debate

Another activity that Larsen-Freeman (2000), Richards and Rodgers (2001) state that debates provide an efficient framework for class presentations when the topic simply divides into opposing views. Learners are assigned to debate teams, given a position to defend, and then expected to present arguments in support of their position in groups. The opposing group is given an opportunity to rebut the arguments. Thus, this activity is fairly effective in enhancing argumentation skills.

1.5.1.5. Cooperative Projects

Richards and Rodgers (2001) maintains that learners are divided into groups and expected to select a topic. Each group selects different topics. Learners research

intensely their topics. Each group member assumes a role in the presentation, and then they present their topics in class atmosphere. Cooperative projects are focused on discovery learning and individual learning (2001).

1.5.1.6. Discussion Session

According to Richards and Rodgers (2001), discussion sessions are especially effective when learners are expected to give class presentation or reports as a way of including the whole class in the presentation. Furthermore, Williams and Burden (1997, p. 78) identify the benefits of discussion session in efficient learning:

A useful idea is to initiate a discussion with the class in the target language about what they consider to be appropriate rules for working in groups, for example indicating when one wants to speak, allowing other people to finish what they are saying, listening to each other, responding to what people say rather than imposing your views on others.

This activity is a kind of dialogue which consists of expression and exchanges of ideas, opinions and knowledge. At the end of the activity it is expected to summarize the key points which are raised.

1.5.2. Interaction in Group Work

Ellis (1994) maintains that group work is significant feature of communication or interaction in classroom. Firstly, when all group members are focused on the group's work, projects and goals, the most of interaction is assisted. Secondly, he points out that "[Group work] increases language practice opportunities, it improves the quality of student talk,..." (p. 598). Thus, group work only exists in more interaction between learners.

According to Mills (1967), listening is by far the most fundamental skill. Learners are expected to work cooperatively at enhancing this skill efficiently in order to cease them change the topic. In addition to this, as Ur (1996, p.228) writes, "[Learners] work in small groups tasks that entail interaction: conveying information, for example or group decision-making. The teacher walks around listening, intervenes little if at all." Thus, more negotiation of meaning is effectively assisted with group work activities.

1.5.3. Evaluation of Group Work

Not having good note-taking would appear to be one reason that some do not perform efficiently in classroom. Ellis (1994) states that evaluating group work provides valuable information about the use of group work which enhanced learners' assessment of study and achievement of learning outcomes. Additionally, evaluating group work provides that the learners ask more specific questions about their tasks. Generally, evaluation occurs at the end of their task (Ur, 1996).

As Ur (1996) points out, there are many ways for designing on evaluation such as questionnaire, checklist, and focus group, etc. From among these ways, questionnaire which involves completing a task in class is more common than the others (1996). Ellis (1994, p. 586) notes that "One reason for the prevalence of questioning is undoubtedly the control which it gives the teacher over the discourse". Thus a question allows the learners to comprehend what is the most crucial part of their task.

Evaluating takes place in two types in the foreign language learning. There are self and peer evaluation (Williams & Burden, 1997). They note that self-evaluation contains the individual deciding on the value or quality of their own learning work. On the other hand, in peer evaluation, the individual reflects on the work of other group members (1997).

1.6. Importance of Group Work in Learning English

Since group work provides the quality of communication and feedback, it plays an essential role in language learning and teaching as a communication process. Long and Porter (1985) point out that group work is a form of cooperative learning which aims to enhance learners' social skills, knowledge, positive relationships among them.

1.7. Benefits and Difficulties of Group Work

As several researchers (Adamson, 2004; Johnson, 2004; Long & Porter, 1985; Schmid & De Bot 2004) point out, there are some advantages and disadvantages of the use of group work in foreign language learning. The key components are a plan and a purpose behind group work to avoid disadvantages.

1.7.1. Benefits of Group Work

Classroom interaction can be provided with the help of group work activities (Adamson, 2004). Foreign language learners effectively improve their communicative competence and language performance through being implemented group work in classroom. Moreover, according to Ur (1996), the communicative tasks implemented within a group reflect better real life situations which are very restricted outside the classroom. Thus, advantages of group work are usually subcategorized as social, psychological, and cognitive advantages.

We assume that group work learning affords students, at all levels, with enormous advantages that may not be available in the traditional instruction of working, learning individually, because a group of students can accomplish meaningful learning especially through their discussions, interactions dialogues ... better than any individual can.

1.7.1.1. Academic Advantages:

There are some educational reasons for requiring students to participate in group activities. Group work enhances student understanding. Students learn from each other and benefit from activities that require them to articulate and test their knowledge. Group work provides an opportunity for students to clarify and refine their understanding of concepts through discussion and rehearsal with peers. Many, but not all, students recognize the value of their personal development at group work and of being assessed as a group member. Working with a group and for the benefit of the group also motivates some students. For instance, group assessment helps some students develop a sense of responsibility: 'I felt that because one is working in a group, it is not possible to slack off or to put things off. I have to keep working otherwise I would be letting other people down'.

- **Group work develops oral communication skills.**

When students are working in small groups, one member verbalizes his /her answer while the others are listening, asking questions, and making comments about what they heard. Therefore, classification and explanation of one's answer is a very important part of the collaborative process and represents a higher order thinking skill. A consequence of having students work together in small groups is that they speak

with one another and directly engage in specific language use that is why students must develop their ideas of what they are presenting, and orally communicate with their peers. Hence, they will -of necessity- acquire new terms, vocabulary, expressions and new information. When students work in groups, orally express themselves, three benefits may occur: First, weak students working individually are likely to give up when they get stuck, working cooperatively in small groups, makes them keep going on, yet the more advanced students faced with the task of explaining and classifying ideas to weaker/ less able students often find gaps in their own understanding to fill them in. Second, instead of individual thinking about a matter in isolation, a group will often look at a problem from a wider perspective and consider many more suggestions than one person thinking alone would. Third, by discussing various aspects of any topic and questioning all the students in the group who can participate in actually giving their opinions and eventually know that others are counting on them. Nelson le Gall (1992:120) points out:

Through encouragement from the group to try new, more active approaches and through social support social reward for even partially successful efforts, individual students in a group come to think of themselves as capable of engaging in interpretation .

In fact, encouragement is very important and necessary for students to keep them going on and enhance their classroom participation.

- **Group work develops higher level thinking skills.**

Students working together are engaged in the learning process instead of passively listening to the teacher presenting the information; they represent the most effective form of continuous interaction. They may develop valuable problem solving skills by formulating their ideas, exchanging and discussing them, receiving immediate feedback and responding to questions and comments by their partners. In a group work, the teacher is able to observe and assess individual students' thinking and how they are learning through their responses.

According to Roberta Dees(1991:421) "**Although it is not clear which components of group work learning are responsible for improvement in higher-**

level thinking, attempts have been made to identify the components. One conjecture is that dealing with controversy may be such an element."

Smith, Johnson, and Johnson(1981:663) studied sixth grade students who worked on controversial issues. They found that for students engaged in controversy, **"the cognitive rehearsal of their own position and the attempts to understand their opponents' position result in a high level of mastery and retention of the materials being learned"**. The Johnsons have developed a cooperative method called "structured controversy" where students study and defend one position and then switch with another group which has taken the opposite position. Slavin (1992:173) emphasizes that **"Students will learn from one another because in their discussions of the content, cognitive conflicts will arise, inadequate reasoning will be exposed, disequilibrium will occur, and higher quality understandings will emerge"**.

- **Group work creates an environment of active, involved exploratory learning**

Slavin (1990)

Group work is by its nature an active method of teaching. Thus, the entire focus of collaborative learning is to actively involve students in the learning process. Whenever two or more students attempt to solve a problem or answer a question, they become involved in the process of exploratory learning; they interact with each other, share ideas and information, seek additional information, make decisions about their final draft and orally present it to the entire class. The collaborative process enables the teacher to move around the class in order to observe students interaction. An opportunity is created whereby the teacher can talk to students directly or in small groups. Teachers may raise questions to help direct students or explain concepts.

- **Cooperative discussions improve students' recall of text content** Slavin and Tanner (1979:294-298).

When students read a text together, explain the concepts to each other and evaluate each others' explanations they engage in a high level of critical thinking. They frame the new concepts by using not only their own vocabulary but also by basing their comments upon their previous knowledge. Thus they construct a new knowledge base on top of their existing one. This process leads students 'deeper

understanding and greater likelihood mainly as they will retain the material longer than if they worked alone.

Johnson & Johnson (1979:p51-70) found that engaging in discussion over controversial issues improves recall of important concepts. Ames and Murray(1982p894-897) found that discussion of controversial ideas among pairs of non conservers on Piagetian conservation tasks improves their recall of content material.

Dansereau (1985) has developed a structure called "cooperative scripts" where pairs of students read a section of text and then one serves as a recaller and summarizes the information while the other student listens for any errors, fills in omitted information and thinks of ways in which both can remember the main ideas. He found that while both students learned more and were able to recall the information longer than students working alone, the recaller learned the most.

The level of discussion and debate within groups is substantially greater than when an entire class participates in a teacher led discussion, in which they receive immediate feedbacks or questions about their ideas, formulate responses without having to wait for long intervals to participate in the discussion (Peterson & Swing 1985p299-312).They construct a new knowledge based on their own interpretations, and their existing base. This process certainly leads to deeper understanding and greater likelihood, consequently, will retain the material longer than if they worked individually mainly for students who are actively involved in the learning process. Engaging in discussion over controversial issues improves recall of important concepts.

- **Group work encourages students' responsibility for learning** (Baird and white 1984).

Promotive interaction, a foundation principle of cooperative learning, builds students' responsibility for themselves and their group members through reliance upon each others' talents and an assessment process which rewards both individuals and groups. In addition, Students can assist each other and take different roles within their groups (such as reader, recorder, time keeper ...etc).The students' involvement is created and thus produces an environment which fosters students' maturity and

responsibility for learning. In this context, the teacher becomes rather a facilitator instead of a director and the students become eager and motivated participants instead of passive followers.

- **Group work provides training in effective teaching strategies to the next generation of teachers** (Felder 1997)

As discussed earlier, new teachers are likely to teach using the teaching style they have been exposed to during their education in which the primary focus is on the assessment process involving individual grades. As group work is concerned, it requires that students present their final work orally to the entire class, being asked some questions by the other students, and hence, answer in front of the entire group. Therefore, the fact of having so many oral presentations, facing the audience, playing the teachers' role, may be of great advantage and benefit for students as it is a sort of training.

During the group work process students were asked not only to assess themselves but their groups as well as the class procedures. Teachers can take advantage of students' input to modify the making of groups or class assignments, manage the lectures and even the group work itself, according to immediate students' feedback. Thus, Students, who participate in structuring the class, assume ownership of the process because they are treated like adults, and their opinions and observations are not only respected but taken into consideration.

- **Group work promotes higher achievement and class attendance** (Hagman and Hayes 1986).

Students who develop personal professional relations with teachers by getting to know them, and who work on projects with their teachers in classroom, achieve better results because of their classroom attendance. On the other hand, teachers, who get to know their students, understand their problems can often find ways of dealing with those problems. They have a great advantage in formulating ways of assisting their students. In addition, students are often inspired by the teacher who takes the time to get to know them, encourage them to aspire for a better performance. According to Felder additional benefits occur in that students' grades are improved, they show longer retention of information, transfer information better to other courses and

disciplines and have better class attendance. There is a strong positive correlation between class attendance and success in courses which may help account for the improved performance. Johnson & Johnson(1990p24) went to say that there is a strong positive correlation between class attendance and success in courses which may help account for the improved performance.

Students need to do real work together in order to promote each other's success by sharing resources, helping, supporting, encouraging, and applauding each other's efforts to achieve. It is said there are important cognitive activities and interpersonal dynamics, which can only occur when students promote each other's learning. This includes explaining orally how to solve problems, teaching one's knowledge to others, checking for understanding, discussing concepts that are being learned, and connecting present with past learning. Especially, if each of those activities, can be structured into group task directions and procedures. Doing so ,helps ensure that cooperative learning groups are both an academic support system (every student has someone who is committed to help him or her learn) and a personal support system (every student has someone who is committed to him or her as a person). It is through promoting each other's learning” face-to-face “that members become personally committed to each other as well as to their mutual goals.

• **Weaker, less able students improve their performances when grouped with higher achieving students** Cohen (1994pp1-35)

In studies of collaborative seat work, Swing and Peterson (1985pp299-312) found that:

Students of low achievement, benefited from participation in groups, heterogeneously composed on achievement in comparison to participation in homogeneously low-achieving group. Students of average achievement benefit from their interaction with others of higher or low achievement.

Burns suggested that with group work, there are explanations, which come from the entire group member rather than from the individual; they can propose or suggest ideas, opinions to their peers prior to formulating a final response and then release their presentations in an informal setting. If a group response is the product, then the entire team or group becomes responsible for the answer. That's why, group work may

therefore, create a safe atmosphere, where students can freely express themselves and explore their ideas without the fear of failure or criticism. In contrast to a lecture format where an individual student responds to a question in front of the entire class without much time to think about his /her answer; such a situation may shake the learning environment.

- **Group work addresses learning styles and differences among students** (Midkiff & Thomasson 1993)

Students working in groups utilize each of the three main learning styles: Kinesthetic, Auditory and visual. For example, a material presented by the teacher is both auditory and visual. Students working together use their kinesthetic abilities mainly when using their hands. Verbal and auditory skills are enhanced when students discuss their answers together. Visual and auditory modalities are employed as students present their work to the whole class (oral presentations). Each of these learning styles are addressed many times throughout a class in contrast to the teachers' lecture format which is mainly auditory and occasionally visual.

Understanding the diversity that exists among students of different learning styles and abilities is a major benefit of group work. Students observe their peers in a learning environment, discuss problem solving strategies and evaluate the learning approaches of other students. Often behaviours which might appear as odd when taken out of context become understandable mainly when the opportunity is presented to students to explain and defend their own reasoning.

- **Group work is especially useful in foreign language and second language courses where interactions involving the use of language are important.**

Brufee (1993) emphasizes the idea that learning takes place when individuals move from the society which they are familiar with to the society which they wish to join by learning the vocabulary, language structure (Grammar) and customs unique to that society. This is true in academic societies that have their own vocabulary and customs. Working in groups is an ideal way to facilitate the acquisition of language and to practice the customs of debate and discussions that occur in a particular academic field such as Mathematics or Psychology or even History. Moreover, the fact

of interacting collaboratively with the teacher in and out of class also facilitates the reacclimation process.

1.7.1.2 Social advantages of group work

Group work contributes in the development of superior social attitudes and values in the foreign language learner. Learning a foreign language requires from the learner to be receptive to the idea of communicating with others and to be transparent to the people and culture which foreign language represents (Long, 1977). In addition, it enhances a sense of identity, belonging, knowledge and skills, and then group is thought as place where relationships form and develop.

Group work is useful for encouraging social interaction for isolated and rural students with local students, and is therefore an important mechanism for supporting the transition of first year pupils into middle school study.

Group Work promotes social interactions; thus students benefit in a number of ways from the social perspective. By having the students explain their reasoning and conclusions; cooperative learning helps develop oral communication skills.

•Group work builds more positive heterogeneous relationships.

A major function of group work learning, we experienced was team building. This is accomplished through a variety of techniques used throughout the duration of the trimester. During the first few weeks of group work class, warm-up activities, getting to know class members' names, and practice exercises help acclimate students to cooperative learning.

The current educational system rewards students' achievement by separating students of different abilities rather than encouraging students to utilize their abilities to help each other. Group work then fosters students' interaction at all levels.

Research has shown that when students of high ability work with students of lower ability both benefit. The former benefits by explaining or demonstrating difficult concepts which he/she must understand thoroughly in order to do so, and the latter benefits by perceiving a concept explained or modeled by a peer.

• Group work develops social interaction skills:

A major component of group work learning elaborated by Johnson and Holubec (1984) includes training students in the social skills needed to work collaboratively.

Students do not come by these skills naturally. By asking group members to identify what behaviors may help them work together and by asking individuals to reflect on their contribution to the groups' success or failure, students are made aware of the need for healthy, positive and helping interactions when they work in groups (Cohen and Cohen1991pp205-226).

The students' level of tolerance and acceptance of other student viewpoints is increased, a skill which no doubt is beneficial in real life situations where one also often has to be prepared to compromise.

When students work in small groups, they generally become more involved in classroom learning activities and as they spend more time learning and sharing group tasks. They tend to learn and form close friends at the same time whether inside or even outside classroom. Therefore; friendship makes them feel more at ease and comfortable; the fact that raises the quality of their learning. Hence, everyone's understanding and knowledge are enriched by their working together; mainly first year students who are the encouraged to work closely together and need to form friends.

Felder(1997) went to say that there is a significant benefit to group work, which is not always apparent because it takes place outside the classroom. If groups are continued long enough during a course they will get to know each other and extend their activities outside the class. This includes meeting on campus for meals, coffee, forming study groups, getting together at each other's homes in the evening and weekends to work on projects or study for exams. Students exchange phone numbers and contact each other to get help with questions or problems they face. Students are able to make new friends and establish study groups easily within group work learning.

• **Group work helps teachers change their roles from their being the focus of the teaching process to becoming facilitators of the learning process. They move from Teacher-centered to Student centered learning,** Hertz-Lazarowitz (1992p3-4).

Cooperative learning paradigms represent a philosophy of life as well as a learning strategy. It says that whenever people get together in groups their purposes are best served when they work together collaboratively to reach their goals versus using competition among group members to address problems. Cooperative learning

paradigms embody the learning community philosophies. Our current educational system, however, is based upon competition among students for grades, admission to scholarships, and above all social recognition. In order to change this paradigm, Group learning structures will need to be introduced at the earliest learning situations and used throughout each student's learning career. In order to accomplish this change in student behavioural attitudes teachers will need to adopt a new role. They will need to step down from the podium and switch from lecturing to facilitating student interactions in class. There are many varieties of group work learning structures including Problem or Project Based Learning, collaborative learning, cooperative structures, to name a few. Teachers need not be locked into one approach, which may or may not suit their particular personality type.

1.7.1.3 Psychological advantages :

- **Group work enhances students 'satisfaction with the learning experience**

By their very nature, students find satisfaction with activities which value their abilities and indulge them in the learning process. Effective groups assume ownership of a process and its results when individuals are encouraged to work together toward a common goal, often defined by the group. This aspect is especially helpful for individuals who fear from failure. (Turner & Zeigler1958p379).

Good and Brophy's (1990) Theory of motivation suggests that motivation increases with expectations of success and higher valuation of rewards. They believe that Group work can emphasis these strategies by containing elements which increase students' enjoyment and encourage intrinsic rewards. Such elements are opportunities for active response, use of simulations, emphasis on immediate feedback, interaction with peers, creation of finished products, and practical use of project outcomes.

- **Group work builds self esteem in students (Johnson & Johnson1989).**

Collaborative efforts among students result in a higher degree of accomplishment by all participants as opposed to individual, competitive systems in which many students may ignore. Competition fosters a win–lose situation where superior students reap all rewards and even recognition, yet mediocre or low achieving students reap nothing. In contrast, everyone benefits from group work environment. Students create a friendly atmosphere by helping each other in doing so. They build a supportive

climate, which may increase the performance level of each member. This in turn leads to higher self esteem in all students.

- Classroom **anxiety is significantly reduced** (Kessler, Price and Wortman1985 p351).

In a traditional classroom, when a teacher calls upon a student he/she becomes the focus of attention of the entire class. Any mistake or incorrect answers become subject to security by the whole class. Such experiences produce embarrassment and anxiety in many students, while in group work situation, when students work in small groups, share their tasks, however the focus of attention is diffused among the group and when an answer is presented to the class it presents the work of the entire group members. Speaking in front of a small group with which they are familiar, rather than in front of the whole class, is also less stressful. Therefore, no single individual can be held up to criticism. In addition, the group members produce a final product which they can review before presenting it to the whole class. Thus, diminishing prospects that mistakes will occur at all. When it happens that a mistake is made, it becomes rather a teaching tool instead of a public criticism of an individual student.

Small groups created a safe environment for students to take risks and make mistakes. We noticed that a student is more likely to ask a question or take a risk in a group of four than in a class of thirty six.

- **Group work encourages shy students to participate in classroom activities:**

By its nature, group work is an active method of learning, which creates a lively enjoyable and friendly atmosphere of sparking discussions, exchanging ideas, respecting others' points of view. This friendly atmosphere makes all students, especially shy ones, feel more comfortable and at ease, eager to participate more with their peers in small groups than in a large class as they can be observed too.

Therefore, it is very helpful to identify students who are shy in encouraging their participation in non –threatening ways.

Richards and Rodgers (2001) state that through group work, anxiety and fear of learners are removed, and also learners' motivation is generated. These are indeed potent by implementing group work in classroom.

According to Richards and Rodgers (2001), learners assume responsibility for their own learning. This is generally a powerful supply in foreign language learning. In addition to being responsible, in a group, learners also become more respectful and patient with other group members.

Larsen-Freeman (2004) writes that another fundamental advantage of group work is the learners' confidence. To her, the learners feel fairly more relaxed and self-confident to speak in a foreign language to a few people rather than to whole class and teacher. Finally, it is extremely affective in improving timid learners' learning.

1.7.1.4 Cognitive Advantages

According to Richard and Rodgers (2001), group work assists actively in the improvement of the learners' communicative competence and its use in real communication opportunities. Similarly, Johnson states that through group work, learners comprehend effectively the meaning of vocabulary in foreign language. Thus, it enhances the process of linguistic knowledge.

1.7.2. Difficulties of Group Work

Some educators argue that besides many advantages, there are also a lot of disadvantage both for learners and teachers. Disadvantages of group work are usually subcategorized as use of L1, group control, coasting and error correction (Long 1994).

1.7.2.1. Use of L1

One of the problems is that learners usually speak in their native language. Long (1994) states that if the class is really crowded, use of L1 become difficult to eliminate. Teachers do not have the opportunity for listening all groups at the same time. However, if the teachers formulate certain rules and be strict about them, they can remove completely this disadvantage (Long, 1977). For example, the teachers give them a punishment such as homework.

1.7.2.2. Group Control

In any group, there is usually at least one bright or aggressive learners that attempts to retain control of the group (Long, 1977). Learners who tend to take over the activity, and the other members of group cannot participate in this activity. On the other hand, especially in cooperative language learning, the teachers assign special roles to avoid these learners becoming dominant (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). The

assignment of roles such as leader, presenter, and secretary is quite sufficient to avoid this disadvantage.

1.7.2.3. Coasting

Another disadvantage of group work is called coasting. Idle learners can ride the group's task without making a considerable contribution (Long 1977). This can be also avoided by giving each of them roles and observing them during the activity (1977).

1.7.2.4. Error Correction

According to Long (1977), during group work teachers usually do not disturb learners, even if they notices some mistakes they have made, but allow them to speak freely. Therefore, the learners learn each other's mistakes or errors, but if they discuss the common ones, these mistakes or errors cease to be (1977).

1.7.2.5 Loss of Creativity:

Whenever you need to work as a group, group thinking becomes more relevant. Because of this reason, creativity has been stumped.

One can never make a good decision, as each and every person in the group will have a say in it.

1.7.2.6 Time Consuming:

The whole process could be time-consuming while working in a group. It takes a lot of time since there is a need for agreement and coordination from all members of the team.

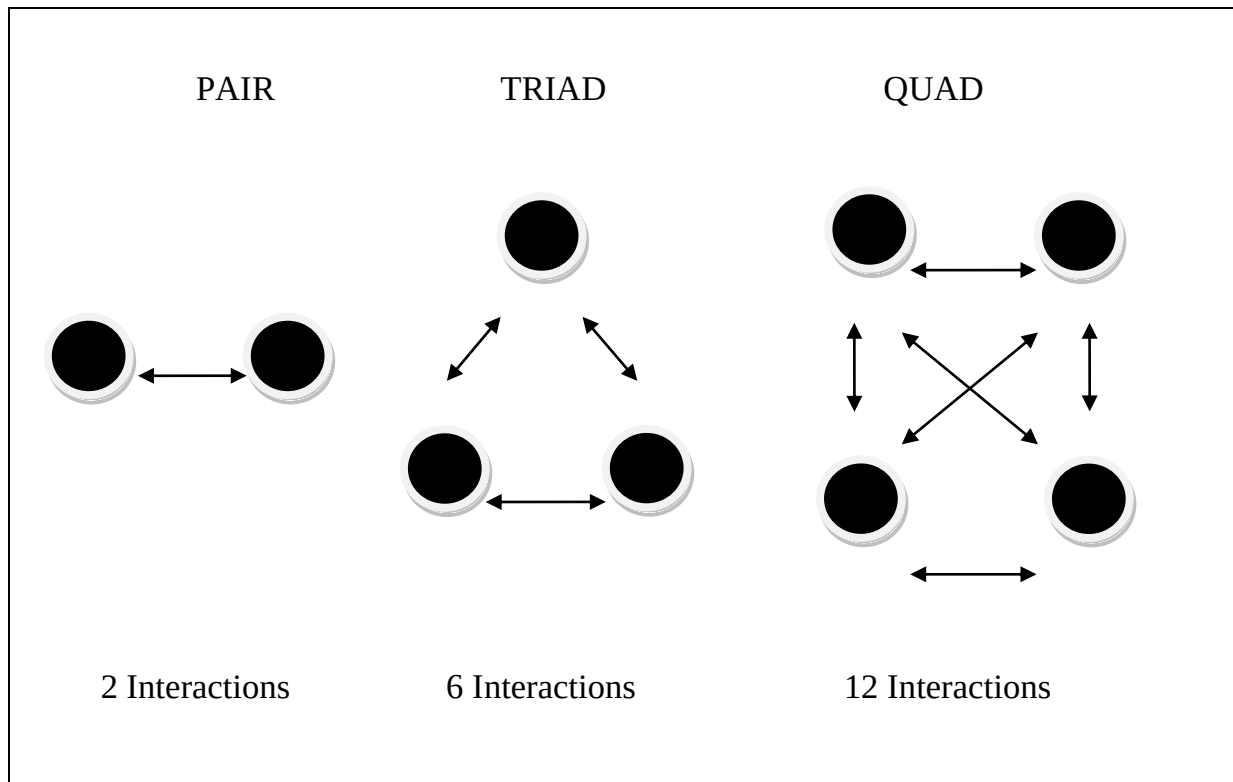
1.7.2.7 Inequality in getting work:

If the person opts to work in a group, when the work is being distributed, everyone might not get an equal amount of work.

Someone might end up with more work, while others might get only little to do. This discrepancy in getting the work can also lead to conflict.

1.8. What is the ideal group size?

The more children that are in a group, the more interactions that are possible , and the greater the challenge. However, the larger group also gives a greater richness in terms of the range of contributions.



It may be useful to consider the following:

- The shorter the time available, the smaller the group should be, as there is less setting up time, and the children have more time to be heard.
- The larger the group, the more skilful children must be in terms of turn taking, and the more support they will need to process the task/learning.
- The nature of the task or the resources available may dictate the size of the group.

For example, if you have a class of thirty children, and you have ten percussion instruments, you may decide to group the children in threes, and allocate an instrument between each three (also called triad).

1.9. Conclusion:

Researches in foreign language learning indicate that group work is potentially beneficial for EFL learners in a number of ways. It maximizes foreign language learning and teaching by offering opportunities for both learners and teachers. It also assist learners draw on their first language while developing foreign language competences. It involves opportunities for the integration of language. Although the beneficial effects of group work in the foreign language classroom are potent, it needs

being careful to plan group work activities. However, the major benefit of group work is that it enables learners to deepen their knowledge in foreign language and thus give opportunity to use effectively foreign language.

Chapter two

Data collection and Interpretation

CHAPTER TWO: Research Design and Data Collection and Interpretation

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2.1. Introduction

This chapter provides a comprehensive description of the research methodology employed in the current study. It first explains the research design of this study where a description of the combination of the quantitative and qualitative research is provided. Then, it identifies the research questions and hypotheses, the research instruments used for data collection. After that, the chapter provides the analysis of both learners' questionnaires and teachers' interviews to gain more insights about the teachers and students' attitudes towards group work or collaborative learning; in other words, do students have positive or negative attitudes towards working in groups in language classes?

This research is a case study, and it is based on the analysis of everything that occurs in the classroom related to the phenomena researched. It concentrates on the analysis and interpretation of both teachers' interview and pupils' questionnaire.

2.2. Research Design:

It is very important for researchers to identify the research design of their studies, as the research design will have implications on both data collection procedures and data analysis. This study is an example of classroom –oriented research in an EFL context. Classroom –oriented research is defined as ‘research which either derives its data from genuine language classrooms or which has been carried out in order to address issues of direct relevance to the language classroom ‘ (Nunan , 1991b: 249). To achieve the best results, the researcher opted for a mixed approach that comprises both a quantitative and a qualitative approach to gather and interpret information. The case study is a form of research that utilizes sampling for generalisation and giving significance to problems their origin and reasons. The use of case study to investigate an area of interest is mostly suitable as explained by Patton (1987:18) “ Case studies become particularly useful where one needs to understand some particular problem or situation in great-depth, and where one can identify cases rich in information”.

In the same line of thought, Anderson(1993:152) explains that a case study is “ concerned with how and why things happen, allowing the investigation of contextual realities and the differences between what was planned and what actually occurred “.It is proposed to centre on an exact matter, aspect or item of investigation . This study,

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therefore, used a case study to find out the correlation that exists between: the effectiveness of collaborative learning strategy and students' engagement and interest in learning EFL in classrooms.

2.3. Population and Study Sample

The participants of this study are pupils of the third year middle school at Melek Bennebi in Mecheria , the current teachers, and the former teachers of English . The reason behind choosing this sample was based on the consideration that third year pupils have at least an idea how to work in groups , in addition teachers of English language know the role of using collaborative learning or group work activities in their classrooms. These teachers have been teaching for many years and they are quite experienced teachers in the field.

2.4. Sample Size and Selection of Sample

2.4.1. Students Profile

The questionnaire was distributed to 3rd year pupils at Melek Bennebi middle school in Mecheria ; the number of students who participated in the survey are **60** pupils from different class rooms. The pupils' questionnaire is designed to investigate the pupils ' awareness of the collaborative group work , it also attempts to discover their actual state of learning in terms of the use of group work.

2.4.2. Teachers Profile

The interview was administered to 3rd year teachers of English language; the number of teachers who participated in the survey are **10** teachers from different middle schools. It is necessary to consider the teachers ' opinions and attitudes towards the use of group work in their teaching , teachers' interview aims at investigating whether they consider collaborative learning as beneficial strategy or not.

2.4.3. Research Setting

This research took place at Melek Bennebi Middle school, in Mecheria. It contains 16 classrooms, 30 teachers and more than 400 learners . The researcher took the third year pupils as a case study.

2.5. Collection of Data

In order to gather significant information for this study, a variety of instruments were employed. The instruments are: a structured observation scale, a questionnaire

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for the pupils, and an interview for a former and the current teachers of the course. These instruments collected the necessary information to answer the questions stated before in Chapter One.

Questionnaires are probably the most commonly used method in general educational research .It is considered as the most common tool used for gathering information about a specific topic using set of clear questions sent for a specific population . It is a research instrument consisting of a series of questions for the purpose of gathering information from respondents . In this regard, Dornyei (2003) claims that questionnaires are used to elicit three types of data about the respondents : “factual , behavioural , and attitudinal “. He writes:

(1)Factual questions are used to find out about who the respondents are;

they typically cover demographic characteristics (e.g. age, gender, and race)..

.(2) Behavioural questions are used to find out what the respondents are doing or have done in the past; they ask about people’s actions, life-styles, habits and personal history ...

(3) Attitudinal questions are used to find out what people think; this is broad category that concerns attitudes, opinions, beliefs, interests, and values (p.8).

2.5.1. Aims of Students Questionnaire

The idea of distributing the questionnaire for students is to characterize the students’ level in English language and to recognise their problems in classroom, then their understanding about group work (GW) technique used by teacher to overcome their difficulties and to improve their English language skills.

2.5.1.1. Description and Structure of Students’ Questionnaire

The present questionnaire is divided into two sections. The first section is about the demographical information by asking students to specify their age, gender and their average mark in English language. The second section consists of (11) questions well organized, they are either closed questions or open-ended questions requiring from learners to clarify and elaborate on their point.

(Q1) students were asked about their average marks in English ranging from good, average and poor.

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(Q2) students were asked about agreement with teachers who adopt group work technique in EFL classrooms.

(Q3) they are asked about classroom activities if they prefer : individual work , pair work or group work.

(Q4) they are also asked if they think the use of group work in EFL classrooms help them learn English.

(Q5) learners are asked about how often the teacher uses the collaborative technique in English session (very rarely, sometimes or fairly frequently).

(Q6) they are asked if the use of group work helps the learners to be stress free. (yes , of course; maybe or no, not sure)

(Q7) students are asked to give their point of view about using group work in EFL classrooms has negative effects.

(Q8) they are asked about how they see their motivation using group work in EFL classrooms.(very low, low, average, good or very good).

(Q9) they are asked if their teachers encourage them to work collaboratively by giving them bonus points.(yes, no)

(Q10) they are asked if their teachers evaluate their work individually or as a group.

(Q11) students are asked about their opinion for the benefits of using group work in EFL classrooms.

(Q12) students are asked when they think it is necessary for the teacher to use group work in the English classrooms and why.

2.5.2. Aims of Teachers' Interview

The aim behind teachers 'interview is to find out whether the teachers are using the collaborative learning strategy or not, and to know if this strategy is more beneficial and effective in teaching and learning process.

2.5.2.1. Description and Structure of Teachers' Interview

The interview is composed of (8) questions that concern the issue under study. It is divided into two sections. The first section includes general information regarding teachers implementing group work in classrooms. The second section is about teachers perception of the benefits and difficulties of collaborative learning.

2.6.Data Analysis

The data collected in this study entailed an analysis that was carried out for the purpose of reaching a reliable interpretation of the evidence. The information was essential to answer the questions that are the central focus of this research. In order to reach valid results, many procedures were involved.

2.6.1. Results of Questionnaire:

The result and percentages of the questionnaire answers will be represented in the following tables, figures and graphs.

Section one: General information about learners

Pupils are asked about their gender.

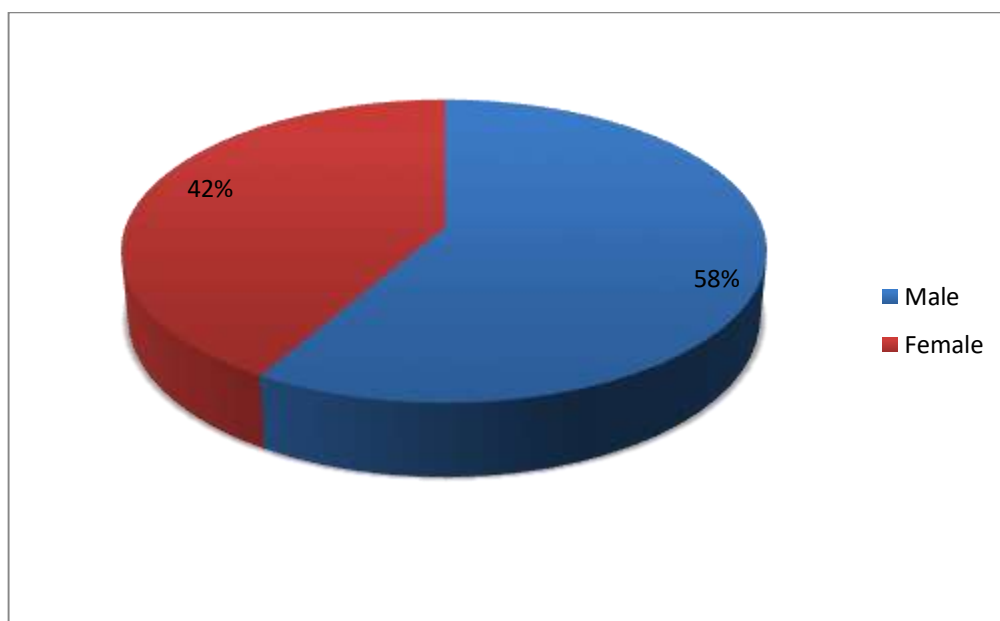


Figure 1: Distribution of sample according to gender

In this question the number of male pupils are (58%) , and the number of female pupils are (42%) , in fact we have recorded that male pupils are more than the female pupils in classroom.

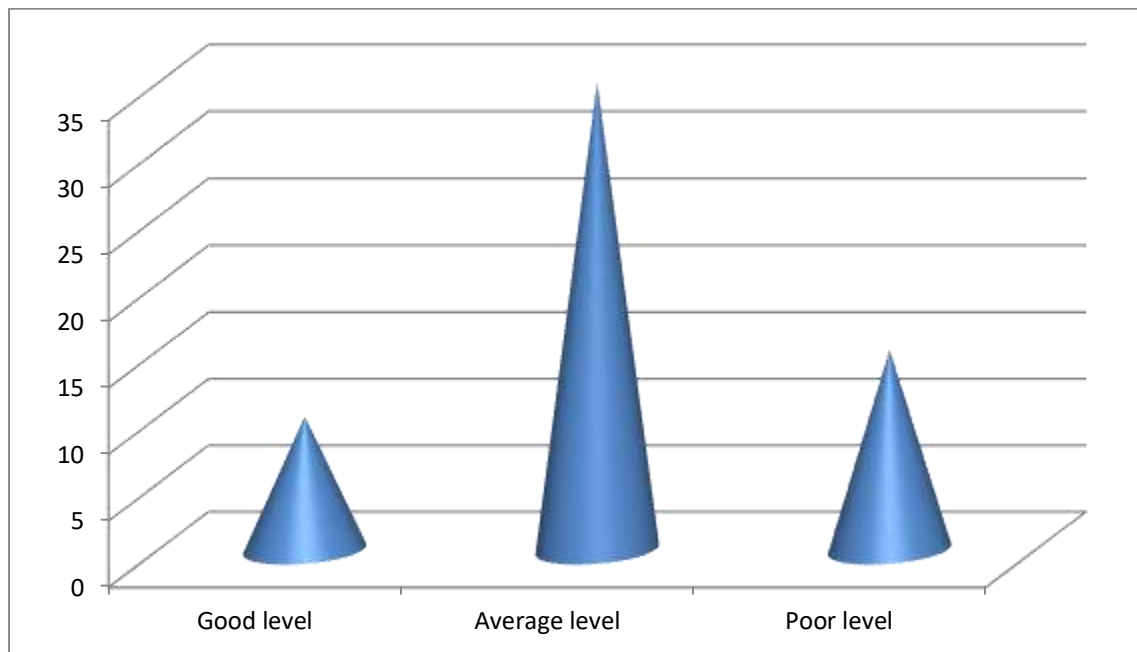
Q 1 . What is your average mark in English?

I fact, this question does not attempt to identify the subjects' actual level; otherwise, a placement test would be more appropriate. Instead, we are much more interested on how these learners perceive their levels .The focus questionnaire results in the following categories displayed in the graph below:

-00/20 _ 09,5/20 : poor level

-10/20 _ 14/20 : average level

-14,5/20 _ 20/20 : good level



Graph 1 : Learners' level

The majority of pupils are perceived as average level learners (58,33%). The good learners represent (16,66%), while the poor level learners represent (25 %). We believe that the learners' perception of their levels may affect the way they get along together to accomplish group work tasks.

Section two : Learners attitude towards group work

Q 2. Do you agree with teachers who adopt group work technique in EFL classrooms ?

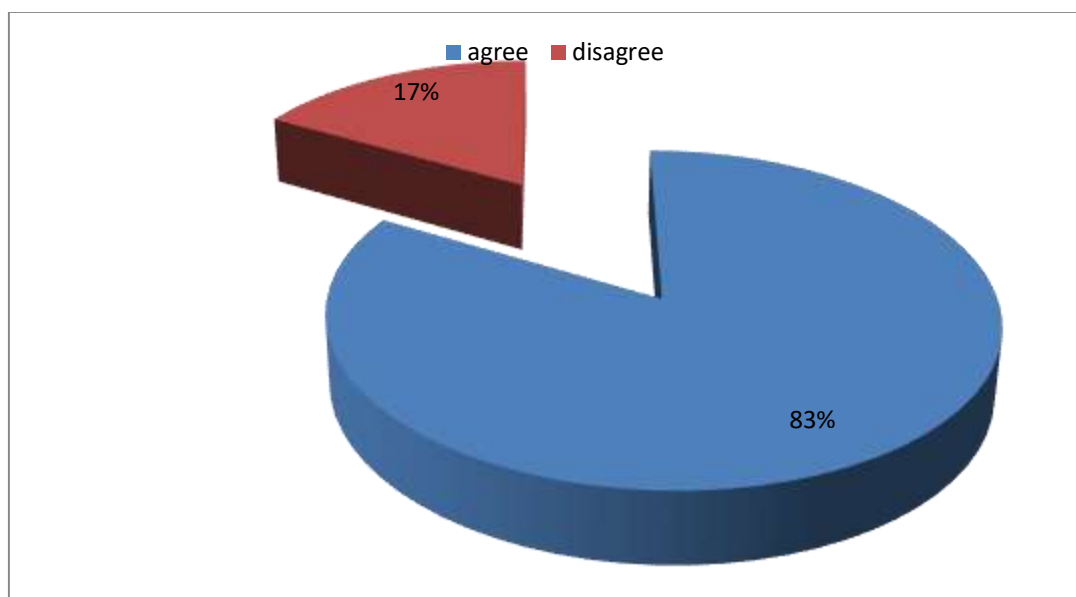


Figure 2 : Pupils' opinion about group work

As figure 2 indicates that (83,33%) of pupils agree with teachers who adopt group work technic in EFL classrooms ,and only (16,66%) of them totally disagree. This means that most participants prefer to work in groups.

Q 3 . When doing classroom activities do you prefer : Individual work ,pair work or group work ?

Pupils are asked about their preference, and they are required to explain their choice in this table.

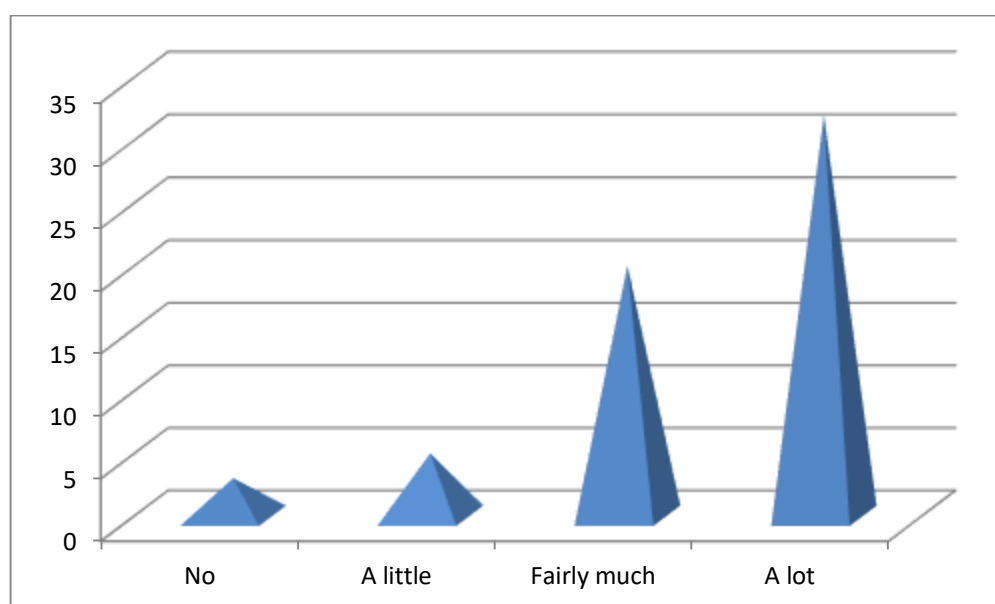
Responses	Pupils' number	Percentages
Individual work	05	8,33%
Pair work	08	13,33%
Group work	47	78,33%

Table 1: Pupils preference

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As table 1 indicates , the majority of pupils (78,33%) prefer to work in groups, and 8 of them (13,33%) want to work in pairs , but only 5 pupils (8,33%) enjoy to work individually . These results prove that group work can be effective since most participants strongly agree and agree with the idea. Most of them believe that group work is very useful and beneficial .Amrani Kawtar a female student of 3rd year says “*Yes definitely. I work best when I’m around my friends. I think it’s really beneficial for me and it brings out the best in me so I work most efficiently when I’m around my friends*”. Another pupil , Achour Oussama a male pupil ,passionately says, “ *I definitely enjoy group work because, for me, when I work alone, I feel like... Now when everyone works alone, everyone has his/her own job. When working in groups, it’s like you share many ideas together and you’re more creative*”.

Q 4 . Do you think the use of group work in EFL classrooms help you learn English ?



Graph 2 : Pupils' degree of learning

In this graph , we are investigating whether or not the group method is helpful for learning. The overall outcome is that most learners find it helpful and a good method for learning English language. Nearly (53,33%)of the total numbers of students have chosen "a lot", and (38,33%) have chosen “ fairly much”. The rest of students have a less degree in agreeing with the statement about (8,33%) have chosen “a little” and no learners (0%) answered “ no”.

Q 5 . How often do your teacher ask you to work in groups in the English session?

The pupils are asked about the frequency of group work use in the classroom.

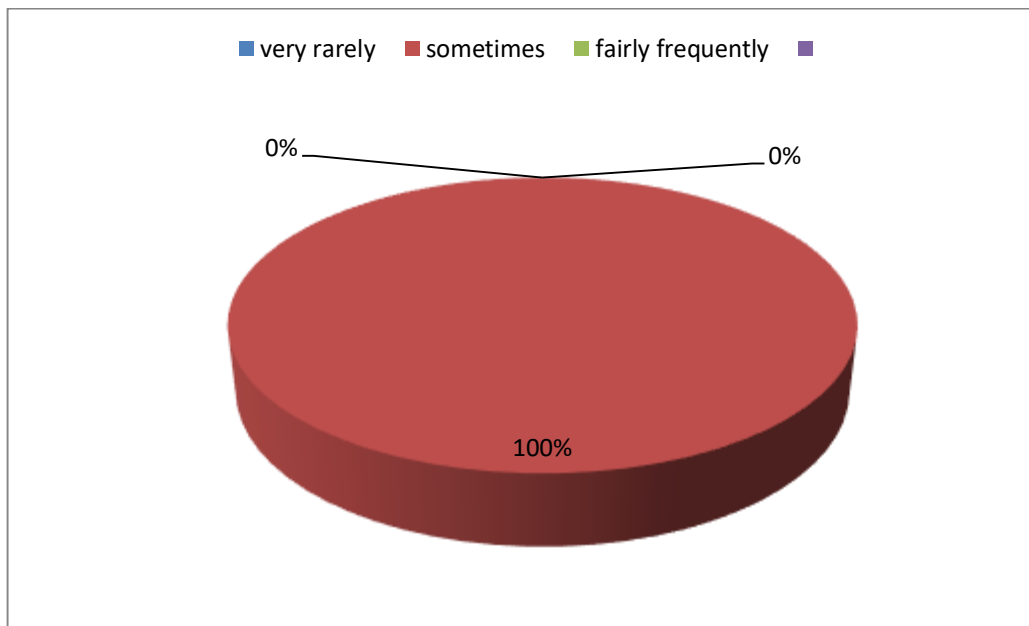


Figure 3 : Frequency use of group work

The percentage indicates that all 60 pupils (100%) believe that their teacher sometimes made them in groups in English session.

Q 6: Does the use of group work help the learners to be stress free?

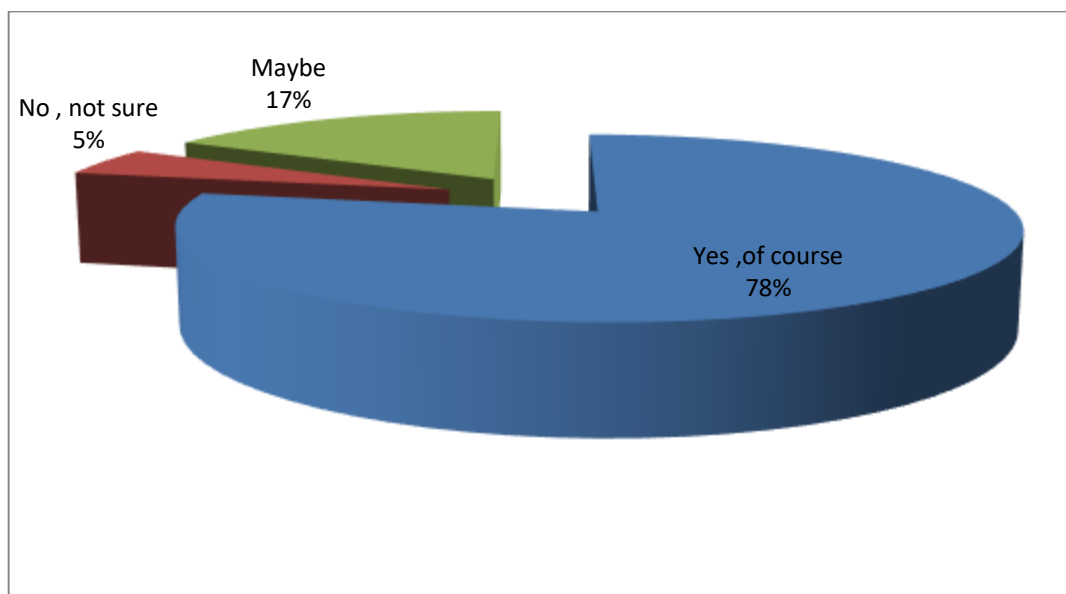


Figure 4 : The importance of group work

The data show that the majority of pupils feel stress free when they work in groups .They interact with their group mates to accomplish the task .From these data , it seems that interaction is mostly emerged and all group members are actively involved , and only (5%) of them are not sure .

Q 7 . Do you support that using group work in EFL classrooms has negative effects?

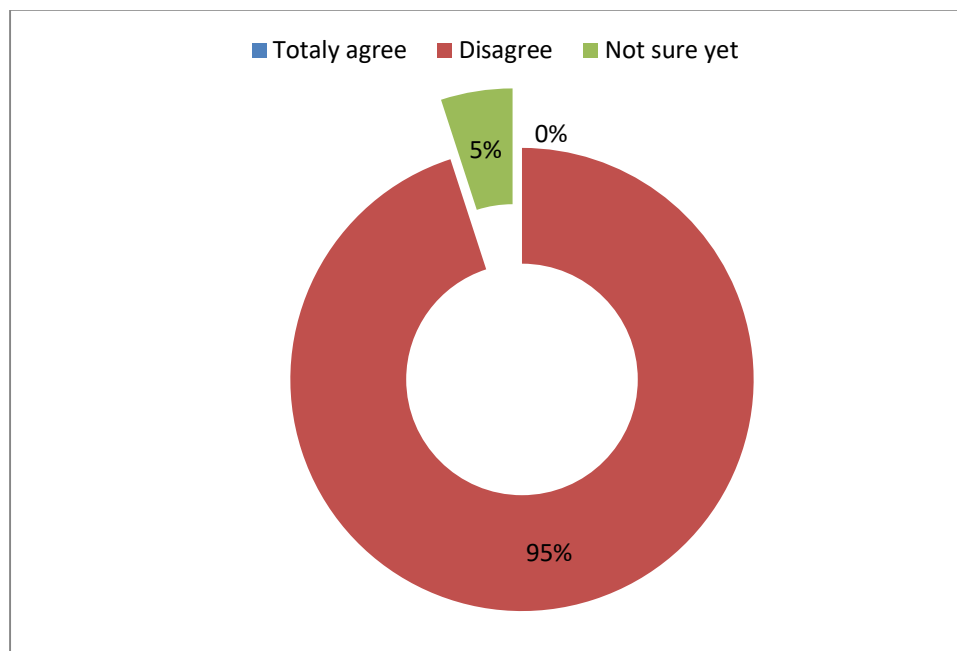
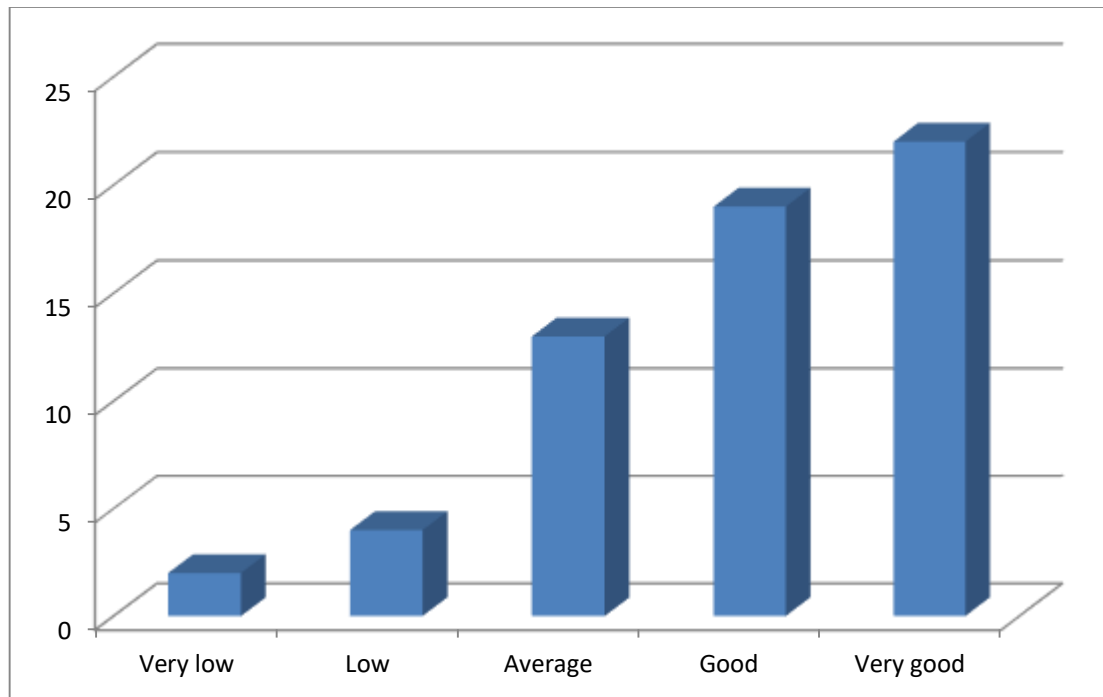


Figure 5 : Difficulties of group work.

This question reflects different reactions of students. Generally, we can infer that participants do not find problems when working in groups (95 %) , except for few pupils (5%) that are not sure yet .However, a large number find it without problems. Most of them do not face any difficulty in involving in their group work .

Q 8 . How do you see your motivation using group work in EFL classrooms?

Pupils are asked about the degree of motivation when working in group.



Graph 3 : Pupils ‘ degree of motivation

As shown in the graph above (68,32%) of pupils are motivated when working together , (21,66%) of pupils are with average motivation , and only (9,99%) are not motivated.

Group work can be an effective method to motivate learners , encourage active learning , and develop key critical-thinking , communication , and decision-making skills.

Q 9. When you complete your work within the group does your teacher reward you (bonus point) ?

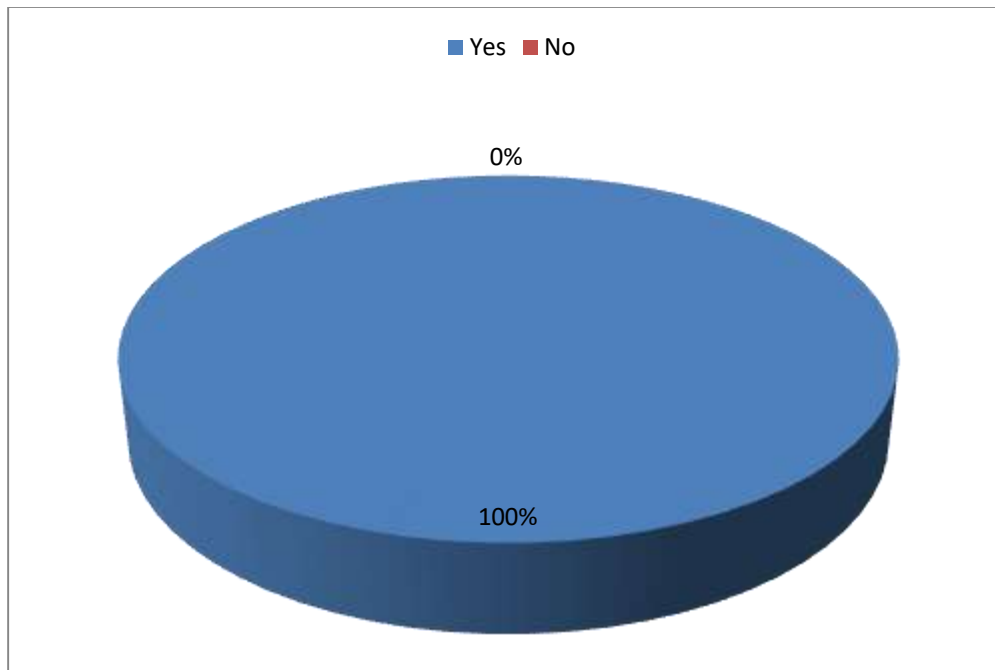
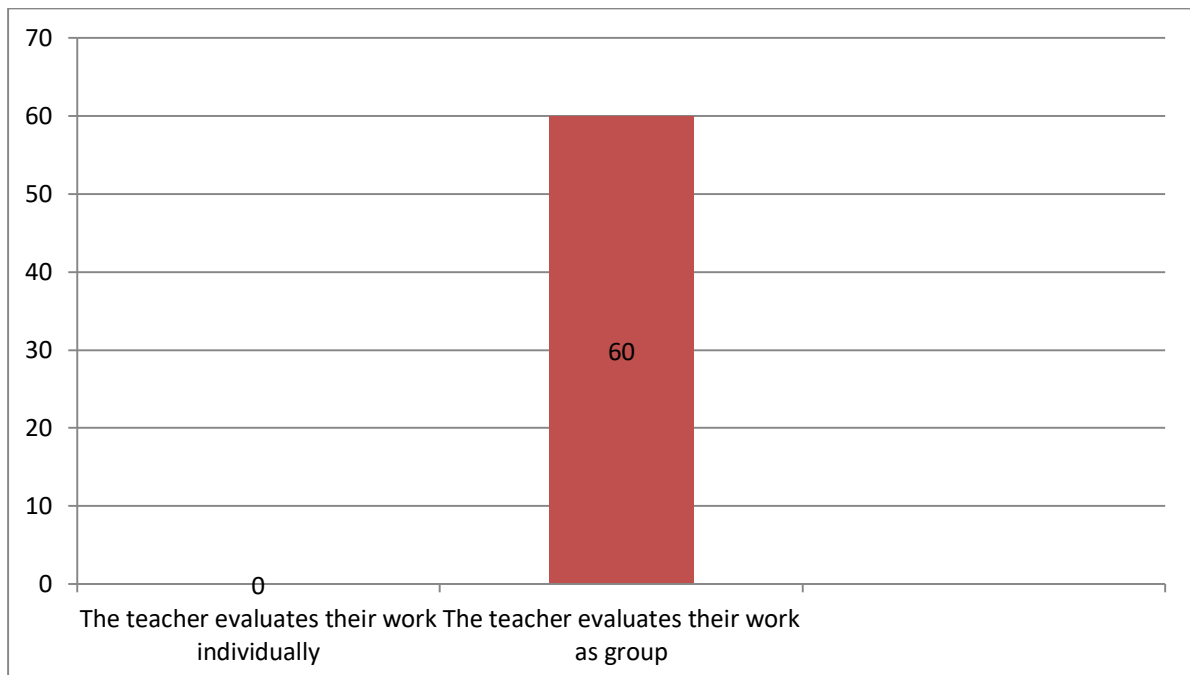


Figure 6: Pupils' reward

The percentage indicates that all pupils (100%) say that they receive reward (bonus point) from their teacher in group work. Reward encourages learners to work better and to be productive in learning both at home and in school.

Q 10 .How do your teacher evaluate your collaborative work ?



Graph 4 : The evaluation of group work

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The data show that all pupils (100%) answer that their teacher evaluate their work as group .

The teacher gives learners opportunity to evaluate themselves and compare their works with other groups independently and confidentially.

Q 11 . In your opinion, what are the benefits and difficulties of using group work in EFL classrooms ?

According to them there are many benefits from learning in groups :

Group work helps in learning more , it increases your understanding of a subject or lesson , improves self-confidence , reduces bullying , sets students up for future success

Group work plays an essential role in language learning and teaching as a communication process. It aims to enhance learners' social skills, knowledge, positive relationships among them.

One of the problems is that learners usually speak in their first language (L1), the class can be noisy and loud.

Q 12. When do you think it is necessary for the teacher to use group work in the English classrooms? And why?

According to the pupils working with others enables you to pool your ideas and see problems from different perspectives. In a group situation, you can attempt tasks that could not be accomplished by an individual, combining a variety of skills and expertise to tackle more complex and larger scale problems.

2.6.2. Results of Interview

The percentages of the interview answers will be represented in the following tables, figures, and graphs . The **10 th** teachers answer the questions as follows:

Section one: Teachers implementing group work in classrooms

Question 1: Do you use group work technique in your EFL classrooms ?

The teachers are asked about the use of group work technique in their EFL classrooms.

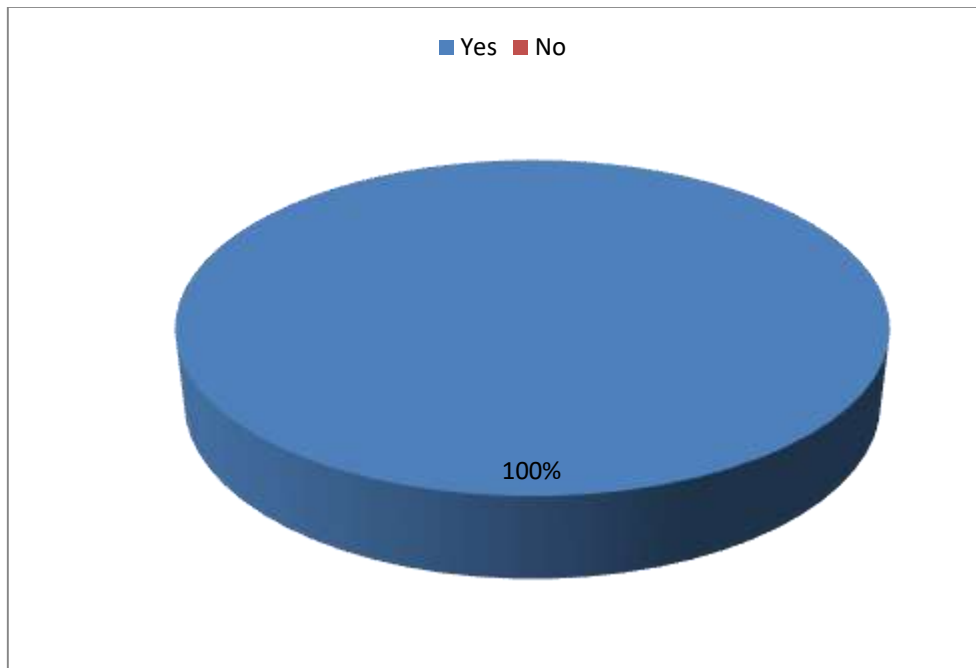


Figure 7 : Teachers ‘ use of collaborative learning

In this question all the English teachers (100 %) argue that they use group work technique in their classrooms.

Question 2 : How often do you make your learners work in groups ?

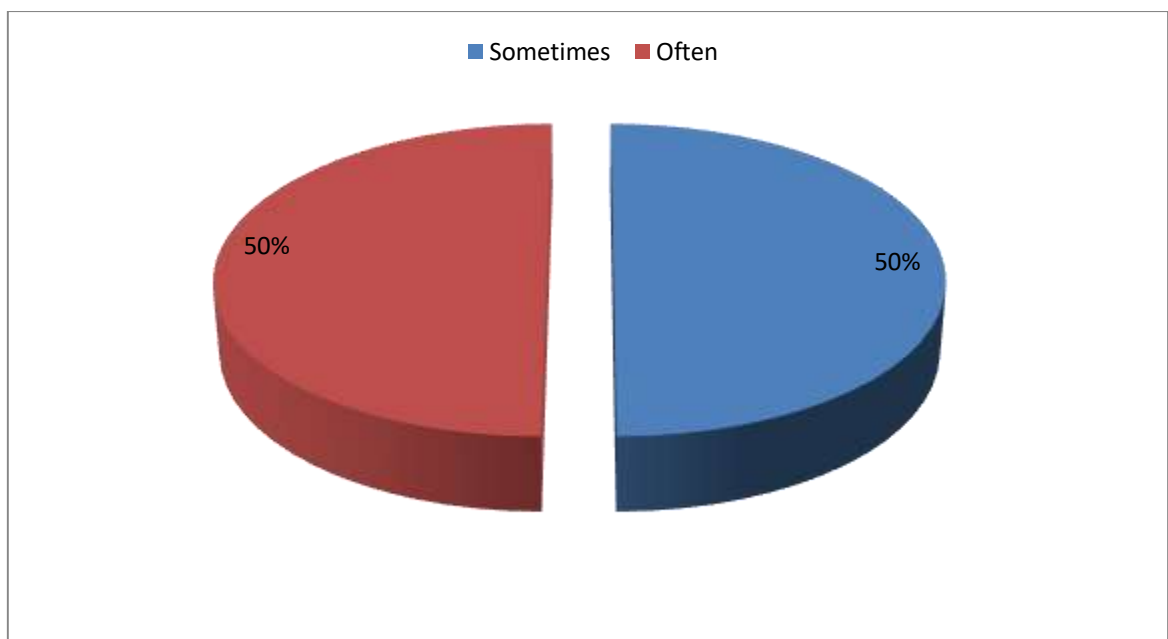


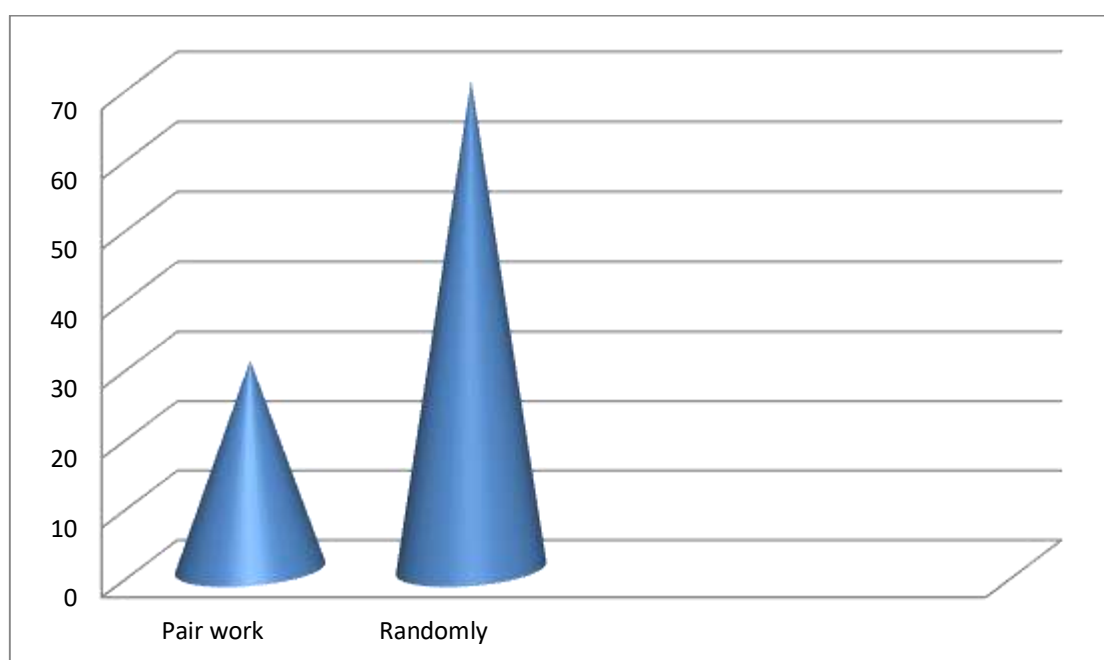
Figure 8 : The frequency use of collaborative learning

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The data shows that half of teachers (50%) sometimes make their pupils to work in groups and half of them (50%) who often make them also in groups .The teachers confirms that cooperative learning is a powerful teaching technique in language classrom ,that 's why they frequently use it .

Question 3 : What is the ideal group size do you use in your classroom ?

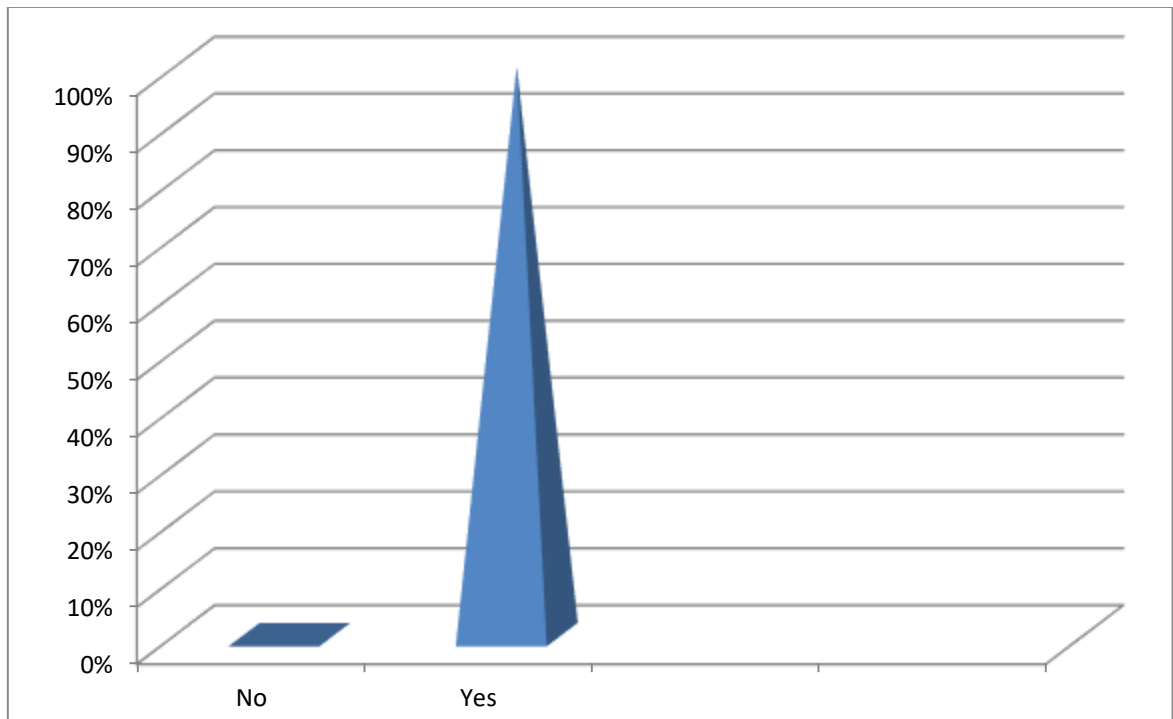
The teachers are asked about the ideal group size , if they form the pupils to work in pair work or randomly.



Graph 5 : Group size

As shown in the graph above ,the majority of teachers (70%) prefer to set pupils randomly , and (30%) of them prefer to set them in pair work .They think that the more children that are in a group, the more interactions that are possible , and the greater the challenge. However ,the ideal group size should not exceed five people , if we go beyond five people the group starts to lose individual performance.

Question 4 : Do you raise your pupils' awareness toward the value of collaborative learning ? Justify your answer .



Graph 6 : Teachers' consciousness toward the value of collaborative learning

All the teachers (100%) declare that they raise pupils' awareness toward the value of collaborative learning; it is an effective and useful method of learning and teaching for students.

Section two: Teachers perception of the benefits of collaborative learning

Question 5 : How do you find your pupils while working in groups ?

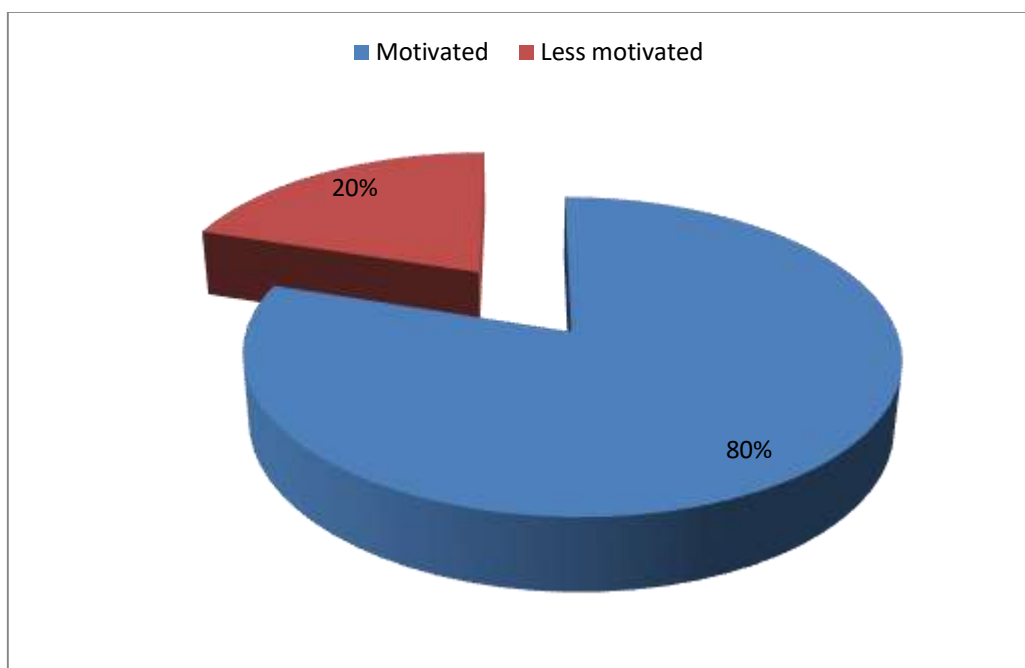


Figure 9 : Teachers' perception of pupils' reaction in group work

The percentage shows that (80%) of teachers find their pupils motivated , and only (20%) of them claim that they find them less motivated.

Question 6 : Do you think that collaborative work improve the skills of your pupils ?

Responses	Teachers' number	Percentage
Yes	10	100%

Table 2 : Improvement of pupils' skills in group work

All the teachers (100%) argue that collaborative learning improve the pupils' skills .

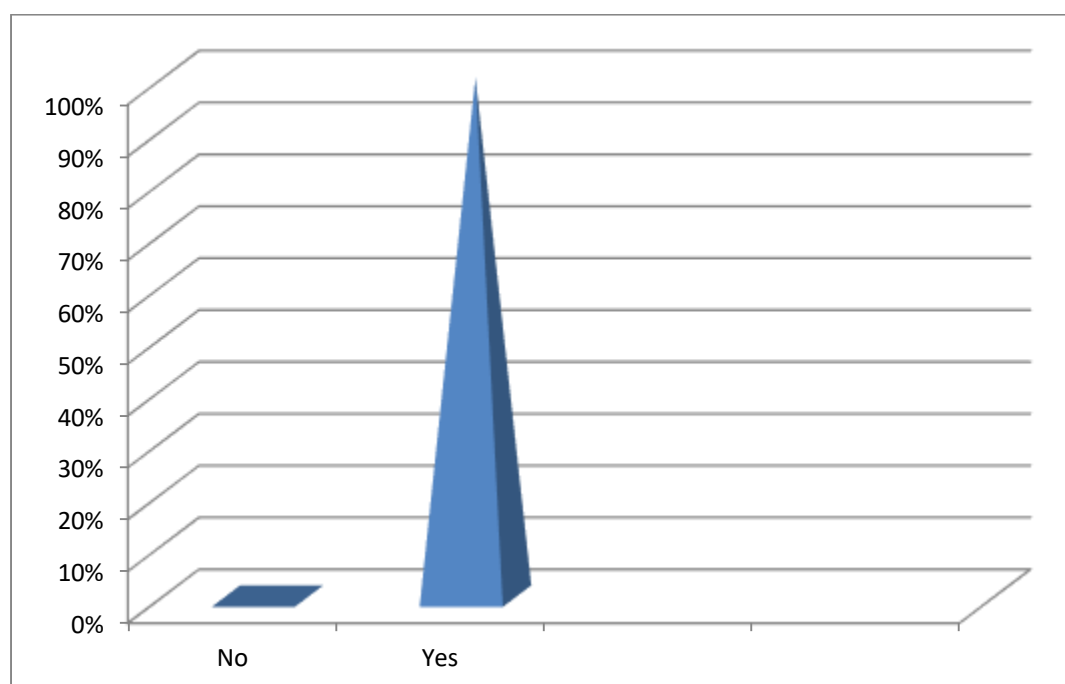
Question 7 : Do you think that GW strategy consume too much time to be applied perfectly ?

Responses	Teachers' number	percentage
Yes	07	70%
No	03	30%

Table 3: Consuming too much time with GW strategy

The statistics of this question shows that the majority of teachers agree that GW needs too much time to be applied i.e. for about 30 minutes until one hour long or even more than that. GW consumes too much time for the members to think, to discuss, and even to debate.

Question 8 : In your opinions , do you think collaborative work is beneficial for learning and teaching process?



Graph 7 : benefits of collaborative work for learning and teaching process.

The statistics of this question shows that group work is a useful method for students in their lessons, it is also a very useful method of teaching process.

2.7. Interpretations of results

2.7.1. Interpretation of Questionnaire:

In general, participants are used to collaborative learning activities in their classrooms; the percentages of students conducting group work support this finding. One of the main findings in this study is that majority of students enjoy group work and believe it is “fun” to learn this way with your classmates while developing social bonds and a spirit of teamwork ,second findings which helps accomplish the task at hand. Presumably, the second finding leads to the third one which is related to the usefulness of collaborative learning activities according to students; the majority of the participants view group work as an effective learning tool, even if we find some difficulties.

2.7 .2. Interpretation of Interview:

The same vision is shared by teachers who have been interviewed who confirmed that cooperative learning is a powerful teaching technique in language classroom. The interviews correspondingly showed a highly positive attitude of participants towards group work. They clearly support this conclusion based on participants’ word choices that have positive connotations like “ ‘ beneficial’”, ‘work best in a group’, ‘brings the best out in me’, “ ‘more creative’”. Similarly, students’ and teachers tone are clearly passionate and positive when they are asked about group work.

2.8. Conclusion:

In this chapter, the researcher tried to shed light on the quantitative and qualitative analysis of the collected data through the use of research instrument which is questionnaire for learners and interview for teachers of the 3 rd year middle school.

From data and information earlier mentioned, it is possible to conclude that group work is implemented by nearly all instructors in a fair level of frequency. Students’ perception towards benefits of group assignment is positive since learners preferred group assignment than individual assignment. When students spend time meeting in groups, they are able to achieve a deeper learning themes covered in class

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as well as develop all skills. Both students and teachers confirmed that group work technique is very beneficial and a powerful way in teaching and learning process. The point that group work should be a part of the learning experience but not the only learning experience of any classroom.

**General
conclusion**

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

This study aimed at finding the students' perception on the use of educational group work activity at English foreign language classes. For that purpose, this study answered the previous research questions. Based on the analysis of the finding of this study, it is proved that group work can be used in the class activities as a valuable tool for the students to improve their skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing).

According to the students, there were many standing points of advantages on the group work's role. Conducting group work activities engages the students to speak a lot, helps the students to speak fluently in front of public, provides enjoyment and fun activities in the students' learning process, provides an easier learning through helping each other and working together and gives an opportunity for the students to share opinions and difficulties. Though group work, the students improve their speaking skills , be brave, fun, be open- minded and the most important is they find it easy to do the tasks from the teacher. Those aspects crucially support the students' learning process and it may create the better learning.

However, some negative effects are found in working in groups which is conducted in the class by the students like consuming too much time because sometimes , it needs a lot of time to be conducted ; making noise and it may disturb the students' or others' concentration; or giving less opportunity for the students to ask the teacher.

As the pedagogical implications, there should be some considerations for the teacher when they want to use group work activities in class. The teacher should consider an interesting topic, choose the best type of group work, be sure that they have to create an effective time allotment, and give a clear instruction in order to make the students understand what they will do or have to do. If those entire steps have been done by the teachers, the group work activities will run smoothly and successfully. In a brief conclusion, collaborative learning can be used to solve the social and academic problems.

In relation to this study, further study can be conducted considering that this study has a limitation aspect since the researcher found that some questions in the

General Conclusion

questionnaire are not truly answered deeply by the participants. Therefore, for further study it is important to do a deep interview to get more information and better result related to the students' opinion about group work.

Appendix A

Questionnaire for Pupils

Dear pupils ,

For the sake of collecting data about the use of group work in EFL classrooms ,
you are kindly invited to answer the following questions by putting a tick (√) on the box
next to the appropriate answer of your choice or expressing your comments where necessary.

Thank you for your collaboration and your time given to us to achieve our modest work.

Section one : General information :

Age :

Gender : Male ☐ Female ☐

Q 1 . What is your average mark in English ?

-Good	☐
-Average	☐
-Poor	☐

Section two : Learner 's attitude towards group work

Q 2 . Do you agree with teachers who adopt group work technic in EFL classrooms ?

-Agree	☐
-Disagree	☐

Q 3 . When doing classroom activities do you prefer :

-Individual work?	☐
-Pair work?	☐
-Group work?	☐

Q 4 . Do you think the use of group work in EFL classrooms help you learn English ?

-No	☐
-A little	☐
-Fairly much	☐
-A lot	☐

Q 5 . How often do your teacher ask you to work in groups in the English session ?

-Very rarely

-Sometimes

-Fairly frequently

Q 6 . Does the use of group work helps the learners to be stress free ?

-Yes, of course

-No , not sure

-Maybe

Q 7 . Do you support that using group work in EFL classrooms has negative effects ?

-Totaly agree

-Disagree

-Not sure yet

Q 8 . How do you see your motivation using group work in EFL classrooms ?

-Very low

-Low

-Average

-Good

-Very good

Q 9 . When you complete your work within the group does your teacher give you bonus point ?

- Yes

- No

Q 10 .How do your teacher evaluate your collaborative work ?

-He / She evaluate your work individually

- He / She evaluate your work as group

Q 11. In your opinion, what are the benefits and difficulties of using group work in EFL classrooms?

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

Q 12 . When do you think it is necessary for the teacher to use group work in the English classrooms ?and why ?

.....
.....

Thank you very much

Appendix B

Teachers' interview

Dear teachers ,

For the sake of collecting data about the use of group work in EFL classrooms ,
you are kindly invited to express your opinion about collaborative learning in rising
pupils' learning .

Thank you for your collaboration and your time given to us to achieve our modest
work.

Section one : Teachers implementing group work in classrooms

Question 1 : Do you use group work technique in your EFL classrooms ?

Question 2 : How often do you make your learners work in groups ?

Question 3 : What is the ideal group size do you use in your classroom ?

Question 4 : Do you raise your pupils' awareness toward the value of collaborative
learning ? Justify your answer .

Section two : Teachers perception of the benefits of collaborative learning

Question 5 : How do you find your pupils while working in groups ?

Question 6 : Do you think that collaborative work improve the skills of your pupils ?

Question 7 : Do you think that GW consume too much time to be applied perfectly ?

Question 8 : In your opinions , do you think collaborative work is beneficial for learning
and teaching process?

Thank you for your participation

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