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FOSTERING LEARNERS AUTONOMY THROUGHT COOPERATIVE LEARNING

The Case of EFL LMD2 Students of Ahmed Salhi University Center Naama

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DEDICATION

In the Name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

All the Pries is due to God alone, the Sustainers of all the worlds

This work is dedicated to:

- *My deceased Father "**Kouider**" God rests his soul.*
- *My dear Mother "**Khira**" who was a great help; especially during the whole period of my studies.*
- *All my brothers "**Abed samed**" "**Walid**" and lovely sister "**Nabila**" "**Ikram**" for their love and supports.*
- *Equal thanks to my lovers N**oria** and **Abdelatif***
- *To all my friends with whom I shared the University life with its lights and shadows.*
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Abstract

The present investigation aims to shed light on the methods used by EFL instructors when teaching to improve learners' autonomy. One of the methods that covered this interest is cooperative learning. Thus, the general rationale of this study is to check whether and how cooperative group work may foster learners' autonomy. It aims to investigate the extent to which instructors incorporate cooperative learning (CL) which is a new approach that is supported by research because of its positive effect on the learner. To fulfill the aims of the present research work, a questionnaire was administered to students in question to probe information about their perspectives, view points and preferences towards working in-group to improve their motivation and setting goals. On the other hand, an interview was administrated to the selected teachers to conduct this research to gain more insights about the techniques they usually rely on to enhance their learner's autonomy. The discussion of the results provides evidence that cooperative group work is the best technique for developing learners' autonomy and increasing their self directed learning. Moreover, the students have positive attitudes toward cooperative learning techniques. Finally, this study recommended some suggestions for teachers to guide them for effectively implementing this technique, and others for students that may help them to improve their autonomy.

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List of Abbreviations

CL: Cooperative Learning.

EFL: English as a Foreign Language.

ICT: Information Communication Technologies.

ICP : Informal Cooperative Learning.

LMD: Liscence, Master, Doctorat

% **:** percentage.

General Introduction

Nowadays, English is spoken around the globe and has wider dispersion than any other language; it becomes hard to thrive in this world without knowing this language. For this reason, its teaching is viewed as one of the rapid processes in this increasingly changing world. In the light of such striking reality, the field of educational psychology strives hard to comprehend the complexity of the educational process by placing its interest first on teachers since they constitute the power of authority in an educational setting. Students' poor achievements and the failure of an educational system are generally related to the quality of education instructors provide. To reach an effective language teaching, teachers must possess a profound new instructional approaches and methods.

Recently, there has been a great focus on social learning methods as a way to develop students' learning abilities across all subject areas. Cooperative learning, as an instructional method, is one of the most effective social strategies that can increase student's involvement, autonomy and interest in learning. CL method has been suggested as an alternative solution to many educational problems in a large number of works, appropriate for every subject area and every learner age. The reason why higher academic outcomes, effective development and social skills are attained when this method is being applied in the educational situations. This later helps in making more focus on students than on teachers.

The fact of using cooperative learning technique in EFL classrooms to give the students the opportunity to take charge and be responsible for organizing their setting goals stimulated the researcher to investigate the benefit of CL in promoting learners' autonomy of second year undergraduate students at the University of Naama. The main objective sets out to this research work focusing the question of:

- ❖ How cooperative learning influences the learners' autonomy?

From the above connotations two research questions are put forwards:

- What is the teacher's role in encouraging cooperative activities to promote learners autonomy?
- How cooperative learning encourage the student's autonomy?

The following hypotheses, hence, sprung from the previous questions:

- Learners can behave more autonomously when the teacher provides genuine learning opportunities in which students are actively engaged in the development of each activity proposed in the classroom.
- Cooperative work had a positive influence on the increase of learners' autonomy to discuss and exercise more choices and control over their learning process.

The handling of the main issues governing the present dissertation will be dealt within two interrelated and different chapters:

Chapter one addresses the reader to the basic definitions of the concepts and approaches related to both cooperative learning and autonomy involving their types and methods, it also highlights the researchers and the important results of structuring cooperation in the classroom.

Chapter two is, basically, a descriptive chapter, devoted to the analysis of the findings obtained from the different research tools. An exploratory type of case study was chosen to investigate systematically a randomly selected sample of (30) LMD2 EFL students. In fact, two research instruments have been utilized including questionnaire administrated to students and an interview prepared for their teacher. The obtained information were treated using both quantitative and qualitative techniques. It also offers some alternative suggestions and pedagogical remedies to make the process of implementing cooperative learning in EFL classes easier in the eyes of both instructors and learners.

Finally, it should be noticed that the present research work does not represent a one-for all solution, because it is difficult to provide an understandable work in which every detail about both cooperative learning and learners' autonomy are taken into account. As a result, the ends of this study open door to further research.

Chapter One: Literature Review

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1.1. Introduction

1.2. Autonomy definition

1.3. Individual and Group Autonomy

1.4. Classroom Autonomy

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1.1. Introduction

Language teaching nowadays is not seen as an ability to teach but an ability to make learners learn. For this reason more weight is currently put on the role of learner in the learning process.

It is important to apply appropriate methods and techniques for fostering learner's autonomy. One of the teaching methods that consider students at the center of learning is cooperative learning. Cooperative learning as opposed to individualistic and competitive learning in which learners are put into groups for the sake of reaching a one common learning aim , this method is one of the student-centered classroom instructions which emphasizes the teaching and learning processes. It is a method in which students are inspired to think, solve a problem, integrate and apply their own competencies and knowledge.

Actually, the present chapter will theoretically address the reader to a brief Overview of the basic definitions of the concepts and approaches related to both Autonomy and cooperative learning. It will also highlight the effectiveness and the essential results of structuring cooperation in the classroom.

1.2. Autonomy Definition

With the change from teacher-centeredness to learner- centeredness in education, no more learners viewed as passive recipients of information; but as active interpreters and processers of knowledge; in which the learner take more responsibility in learning by doing this the learner became autonomous in language teaching. Autonomy is one of the bases on which learner –centeredness stand on. In fact, learners nowadays are expected to assume responsibility and take charge of their learning. However; this does not mean that learner's autonomy aims at establishing a (teacher less) learning; on the contrary; the teacher's role is necessary in fostering his learners' autonomy. Moreover developing learners autonomy has became an educational goal in language education.

Autonomy has became part of the mainstream of research and practice within the field of language education .In addition, learners autonomy is based on the idea that if students are involved in decision making in which they are likely to be more enthusiastic about learning and learning can be more focused and purposeful for them .

Promoting learners' autonomy refers to encouraging students to determine the objectives, to define the contents and progressions to select methods and techniques to be used, to monitor the procedures of acquisition and to evaluate what has been acquired. Through this process eventually the autonomous learner establishes a personal agenda for learning by setting up directions in the planning, pacing, monitoring and evaluating the learner process.

The current debate about autonomy in second and foreign language learning originated in Holec's Autonomy and Foreign Language Learning first published in 1979, where he provides a definition of learner autonomy as:

> ***To say of a learner that he is autonomous is to say that he is capable of taking charge of his own learning and nothing more ...to take charge of one's learning is to bear responsibility for all the decisions concerning all aspects of this learning. (Holec, 1981:3)***

Holec supports his definition by a set of roles the autonomous learner is supposed to play such as:

- Determining the objectives.
- Defining the content and progression.
- Selecting the method and techniques to be used.
- Monitoring the procedures of acquisition.
- Evaluating what has been acquired.

According to Holec learners take their first step towards autonomy when they aware that they are responsible for their own learning. This can be achieved only through the involvement in all aspects of the learning process such as: planning, implementing and evaluating.

More elaborated definition of learner autonomy is also put forward by Jeffries (1990) who views it as

> ***learning in which an individual or a group of learners study on their own possibly for a part or parts of a course, without direct intervention from a tutor, so that to take a greater responsibility for what they learn.***
>
> **(Jeffries, 1990:35).**

The different definitions of learner autonomy are mainly due the fact that there are degrees of autonomy, and that the behavior of autonomous learners can change depending on their age, and how far they have progressed with their learning.

1.3. Individual and Group Autonomy

Learner autonomy is not only restricted to individual but also collaborative and entails some: ***"capacity and willingness to act independently and in cooperation with others."*** **(Dam, 2003:1).** Learning does not necessarily imply learning individually, in fact, interaction; sharing ideas; negotiation and collaboration are important factors in promoting learner autonomy.

Littlewood (1999) attributes two characteristics into the practice of autonomy, which he calls proactive and reactive autonomy. Proactive autonomy according to

Littlewood (1999) is when**:** ***"learners take charge of their own learning, determine their objectives, select methods and evaluate what has been acquired."*** **(Littlewood, 1999:75).** Whereas reactive autonomy is***: "the kind which does not create its own directions but one direction has been initiated*.**"** This is an important distinction since it allows the practice of autonomy as a matter of individual expression, and a feature of collaborative environments. The individual is supposed to interact negotiate and share responsibility and work within the parameters laid down by the group.

Another distinction is made by Dam (2003) who puts forwards full and partial autonomy. With full autonomy learners are in charge of their own learning decisions and actions. With partial autonomy a learning programme combines autonomous and non-autonomous elements. This may happen in the classroom, where autonomous activities are done both individually and in peer and group work, within the interference of the teacher so as to provide guidance.

1.4. Classroom Autonomy

Autonomy of the classroom is a relative concept with multi-dimensional meaning. It is relative in the sense that students cannot be completely out of the control of teachers and teachers cannot go beyond the existing educational system. The teacher is still the main source of learning materials. The syllabus is still an important document to guide students to learn.

In order to create the real autonomy of the classroom, we must foster a truly learner-centered philosophy of education. Benson (2007) discusses the implications of the rise of **"**classroom autonomy**"** by arguing that it has led to a re-conceptualization of autonomy from a theory or a philosophy to a usable construct for teachers who want to help their learners develop autonomy. The teachers' attitudes towards the learner change from considering them passive recipients to collaborators as it is put by Reinders & Lamb: ***"While introducing autonomy in the classroom teachers consider students collaborators in the learning process."*****(Reinders and Lamb, 2006:47).**To see learners as collaborators and partners means to share responsibility with them in language learning.

In addition to fostering time management and organization, teachers can lead discussions in which they help students plan, schedule, and prioritize their tasks and activities, making daily lists of tasks to complete, writing reminder notes, carrying a notebook, scheduling weekly events and preparing for the next day the night before, etc. so the teacher ‘s role is very important because :

> ***In formal educational contexts learners do not automatically accept responsibility for their learning teachers must help them to do so; and they will not necessarily find it easy to reflect critically on the learning process, teachers must first provide them with appropriate tools and with opportunities to practice using them.***
>
> ***(Little, 1991:176-77)***

English teachers have plenty of roles to play in establishing an atmosphere that really encourages autonomy and enhance learners’ motivation.

Nunan (1996) presents a picture of what an autonomous classroom and non-autonomous classroom look like:

Autonomous classrooms	**Non-autonomous classrooms**
- Decisions are made with much reference to students. -Teacher introduces range of activities by taking students ‘needs and interests into consideration. -Students are allowed to reflect on, assess and evaluate their learning process.	-Teachers make all decisions about content and classroom norms. -Students are exposed to the activities they are expected to perform. -The assessment and evaluation part are structured in a traditional manner in a way that tests and exams are carried out.

Table1.1: Comparison between autonomous and non autonomous classrooms (Adapted from Nunan, 1996: 21)

1.5. Cooperative learning

Cooperative learning is one of the most noticeable and fertile areas of theory, research and practice in education. It is considered as a system of effective teaching and learning techniques, rather than an approach, in which students are active participants in the process of learning through small group structures as far as they support each other to master the assigned academic content. They go through the process of debating and arguing with each other, assessing one another's current knowledge. Teachers in such method are less dominant .In other words; they surrender control of the class and students rely on their own learning.

Salvin (1995:2) claims that:

> ***Cooperative learning refers to a variety of teaching methods in which students work in small groups to help one another learn academic content. In cooperative classrooms, students are expected to help each other, to discuss and argue with each other, to assess each other's current knowledge and fill in gaps in each other's understanding.***

Furthermore, the term cooperative learning has been documented to be an operative teaching strategy for both teacher and learner. As pointed out in Jacobs and McCafferly (2006:25): ***''Cooperative learning encourages learning to take place and allow communication to foster among learners''.***

That is to say, within this instructional method; students take risks in sense that students of different levels of ability use a variety of learning activities to improve their understanding of a subject. Moreover, each member of team is responsible not only for learning what is taught but also for helping teammates learn, thus creating an atmosphere of achievement. On the other hand; the teacher in cooperative learning classroom must base his grading on clear assessment guidelines to ensure fairness and equity. Observing how each group function and how each individual contributes to his group effort with assigning roles are ways of ensuring fair group garding. In fact, organizing group do not only make the garding fair and equal, but

also increases student's motivation and satisfaction with group work and ensure the participation of each individual.

To sum up the foregoing, cooperative learning as a systematic instructional method to the student-directed approach, this considers students as responsible and active participant in the learning process. It enables them to engage in real communication.

1.6. Traditional Groups versus Cooperative Groups

At this point, some practitioners assert that they structure cooperation in their class, but the effects were not as positive as the literature demonstrates. The secret is clearly seen in the distinguishing features between both traditional and cooperative groups.

Traditional classes include either student who works competitively, each one against another towards a purpose or a reward, or individualistically without worrying of other's performance. In such classes, tutors put their learners to sit and work in teams without further support or careful structure to make group work become teamwork. Basically, these two strategies are not enough to say that cooperation is being properly planned among learners. In this sense, Joliffe (2007:4) writes: ***"Traditionally, primary schools have often organized pupils to sit in groups of four or six, although interaction between them may be very limited".***

However, cooperative classes provide students with incentives to work as a team in order to reach a mutual aim. Such groups encourage learners to find solutions for special problems, which inspire them to debate, support each other, deal with heterogeneity as well as the perspective of others. In other words, cooperation helps individuals to strengthen the confidence in their abilities and motivates them to apply themselves in the learning process. The message is then clear: higher involvement in the learning process yields higher retention of the material learned. The implication is that tutors have to facilitate and coordinate the work. Whereas, learners have to do it by themselves.

Other features which distinguish cooperative and traditional classrooms are teachers' roles, interaction, evaluation and teaching activities. The instructor's role begins when students organized into small groups and started to work together, but what are the strategies to be followed in order to well- structure the process of cooperative learning? The first step, the teacher has to determine the learners' achievement goals concerning both the academic content and the cooperative skills. Secondly, he or she has to decide all about the heterogeneity, the type, and the size of cooperative groups which depend on his or her experience in using this instructional method.

Furthermore, a well-structured learning process requires from the teacher to know how the tasks and assigned materials should be distributed and explained, i.e., he or she assures that all the group members are using the materials and checks whether students are effectively grasping the lesson or the task by engaging them in a two-way communication, where the instructor asks and the learners answer. In contrast, traditional classes involve an emphasis on practices, reconsideration of knowledge, and drills with the figure of authority, i.e., the practitioner. Last but not least, within traditional learning situation scholars may feel discouraged and frustrated. Whereas, in cooperative groups they may gain higher achievement, greater enjoyment of school and larger respect for students with different backgrounds.

Green (2005; in Óhidy, 2008: 93) has clearly differentiated cooperative group learning from traditional group work in the following table.

Traditional Group Work	Cooperative Learning Group
-There is no positive dependence within the group. -There is no individual responsibility. -Homogenous group. -The chosen group leader leads. -Task solving happens in the centre. -Social competence does not count. -The teacher does not interfere in the work of the group. -The group does not evaluate and reflect on their work.	-There is a positive dependence within the group. -There is an individual responsibility. -Heterogeneous group. -Common learning management within the group. -Task solving and the relationship between the group members are equally Important. -Developing social competencies. -The teacher follows the work of the group attentively and helps whenever it is Needed -.Evaluation of and reflection on the learning process in the task of the group.

Table1.2: Differences between Cooperative Group Learning and Traditional Group

1.7. Types of cooperative learning

Within cooperative learning groups students discuss the material to be learned, help and assist each other to understand it, and encourage each other to work hard. Any assignment in any curriculum for any student can be done cooperatively. There are basically three ways in which cooperative learning may be structured in the classroom instructors may use:

1.7.1. Formal Cooperative Learning Groups

Formal cooperative learning groups last from one class period to several weeks. ***"Formal cooperative learning occurs when students work together, for one class period to several weeks, to achieve shared learning goals and complete jointly specific tasks and assignments" (Johnson et al 2002:99).*** Students are mainly giving equal opportunities for using and practicing the language and more interdependence from the teacher.

It is established for a specific task in which students are actively involved in the intellectual work to achieve a mutual goal and complete jointly specific tasks and assignment such as (decision making, problem solving, completing a curriculum unit, conducting a survey or experiment…. Any course requirement or assignment may be structured cooperatively .In formal cooperative learning group instructors:

1. Make a number of preinstructional decisions: instructors specify the objectives for the lesson (both academic and social skills) and decide on the size of groups, the method of assigning students to groups, the roles students will be assigned, the materials needed to conduct the lesson, and the way the room will be arranged.

2. Explain the task and the positive interdependence: instructor clearly defines the assignment, teaches the required concepts and strategies, specifies the positive interdependence and individual accountability, gives the criteria for success, and explains the expected social skills to be used.

3. Monitor student's learning and intervene within the groups to provide task assistance or to increase student's interpersonal and group skills: instructor systematically observes and collects data on each group as it works. When needed, the instructor intervenes to assist students in completing the task accurately and in working together effectively.

4. Assess student's learning and helping students process how well their groups functioned: student's learning is carefully assessed and their performances evaluated. Members of the learning groups then discuss how effectively they worked together and how they can improve in the future.

1.7.2. Informal Cooperative Learning Groups

Informal cooperative learning groups last from a few minutes to one class period. These are groups that can be used to focus students' attention or to facilitate learning during direct teaching. During a lecture, demonstration, or film, informal cooperative learning can be used to focus student attention on the material to be learned, set a method conductive to learning; help set expectations as to what will be covered in class session. During direct teaching, the instructional challenge for the instructor is to ensure that students do the intellectual work of organizing material, explaining it, summarizing it, and integrating it into existing conceptual structures. The teacher plays the role of a motivator for using the informal cooperative learning.

There are two essential aspects of using informal cooperative learning groups the teacher should be aware of using them .The first aspect is to make the task and the instructions clear and very precise. The teacher in the second aspect needs the groups to produce a specific product (Gillies et al, 2008).

The purpose of using informal cooperative learning is to make sure that the students are actively engaged in understanding the material, and to provide ample time for teachers to listen to student. In which the teacher can give guides and instructors theme. And provide new insight for understanding the concept and the material being given. Johnson et al (2002:99) presented a set of purposes for using ICL and they are as follow:

(a) focus student attention on the material to be learned
(b) create an expectation set and mood conducive to learning
(c) help organize in advance the material to be covered in a class session
(d) ensure that students cognitively process the material being taught
(e) provide closure to an instructional session

1.7.3. Cooperative Base Groups Cooperative base groups are long term (long-term groups that last at least a semester and preferably a year or more), heterogeneous groups with stable membership whose primary purpose is for members to give each other support, help, encouragement and assistance they need

to succeed academically. The use of base groups tends to improve attendance, personalize the work required and the school experience, and improve the quality and quantity of learning. Positive development is enhanced when base groups are given the responsibility for conducting a year-long service project.

1.8. The elements of cooperative learning

Cooperative learning as teaching technique students are put into groups to help each other to accomplish a common learning goal; in which students are expected to assume responsibility depending on theme selves. Cooperative learning means the arrangement of students into small mixed ability learning groups in which the learner is considered as an active recipient, to discus, argue and to assess each other's current knowledge whereas, the practitioner as adviser, observer, facilitator and charge agent. As a result, it is only under certain conditions that cooperative efforts will be expected to be more productive than traditional classes. Those conditions are: 1) – positive interdependence 2) - individual accountability 3) - face-to-face interaction 4) - social skills and finally 5) - group processing.

1.8.1. Positive interdependence

All for one and one for all positive interdependence is a sense of sink or swim together. It is described as the heart of cooperative learning; which entails the effort of every single member for the success of the whole group***" positive interdependence is the perception that you are linked with others so that you cannot succeed unless they do" (Johnson et al 2002:96).***positive interdependence creates realization that the member of the groups have two responsibilities: to learn the assigned materials and to ensure that all members of their group learn the assigned material. Positive interdependence requires the entire group member to roll up their sleeves and work together to accomplish goals beyond individual success. In order to strengthen positive interdependence, the following methods could be adopted:

(a) Joint rewards (if all members of the group score 90 percent correct or better on the test, each will receive 5 bonus points).

(b) Divided resources (giving each group member a part of the total information required to complete an assignment).

(c) Complementary roles (reader, checker, encourager, elaborator) may also be used.

A well-structured cooperative learning exist when the members of the group notice that they are learning from each other, sharing their resources, providing mutual support, and celebrating their joint success. Basically, both groups and assignments should be planned; hence all the group members interact with each other to produce higher achievement and productivity for the success of the whole group.

1.8.2. Individual Accountability

The second essential element of cooperative learning which mediate in the effectiveness of cooperation is **"**individual accountability**"** or simply **"**personal responsibility**".** Each student is accountable for their own contribution to the group. Clearly described goals ensure that each student knows what she/he is responsible for and what the group is responsible for.

Its delineates each student's feeling of responsibility toward his learning and the contribution of each group member in accomplishing a common goal. That is to say, individual accountability asserts that all the team members are in fact strengthened to learn cooperatively.

In the same line of thoughts, Johnson et al (2002:96) maintain***: "Individual accountability exists when the performance of each individual student is assessed and the results are given back to the group and the individual".*** Under this logic, the reasons why teachers put students in cooperative learning groups so that all students can achieve higher academic success individually than were they to study alone. Therefore, each student must be held individually responsible and accountable for doing his part of the work to determine the objective for the academic success.

It is a sense of personal responsibility to interact and contribute one's efforts to accomplish a common task. This involves completing one's part of the work, to give more assistance, support, encouragement and facilitating the work for all the other group members. The sense of commitment to each other due to the positive interdependence. The more students perceive they are linked together; the more they perform better in the group. Individual accountability is structured through the accession of the participation of each student by:

(a) Giving an individual test to each student
(b) Having each student explain what they have learned to a classmate
(c) Observing each group and collecting data on participation
(d) Randomly selecting one student's product to represent the entire group

1.8.3. Face to face promotive interaction

Positive interdependence results in face-to-face promotive interaction. ***"Individuals encouraging and facilitating each other's efforts to complete tasks and achieve in order to reach the group's goals" (Johnson et al 2002:97).*** Group members need to arrange themselves so that they are positioned and postured to face each other for direct eye-to-eye contact and face-to-face academic conversation, through group building activities, promotive behavior is facilitated. Face to face promotive interaction is characterized by individuals providing each other with assistance, efficient and effective help, supporting, encouraging, and challenging each other's reasoning and conclusions for the sake to promote higher quality decision making and greater insight into the problems being considered.

Moreover, group works provide the students with the opportunity to be involved dynamically in promoting each other's learning through exchanging information, solving problems, explaining to each other the new academic content, etc. Others aspects of interaction encompass members:

- Exchanging different materials.
- Helping each other's performance.

- Challenging one another's outcomes and influence their reasoning and conclusions.
- Providing each other with feed back to improve tier performance.
- Trusting each other, social support to achieve a mutual goal.

1.8.4. Social skill

The fourth element of cooperative learning which is about giving positive feedback and involving every member. It is defined as the appropriate use of interpersonal and small-group. It is important for effective group functioning. Learners must be firstly taught the basic of human interaction skills needed for high quality of collaboration and how to use theme in cooperative learning groups. In this vein, Schultz counters:

> "***Social skills should be explicitly taught to the students so that students could work among themselves, not only in terms of cooperation but also without hostility and without the teacher's authority***". ***(Schultz, 1999:29-37)***

Every student must believe that he or she has an equal chance of learning the content and abilities, and earning the group rewards for academic success, regardless of the group he or she is in. In other words, the student must not feel penalized academically by being placed in a particular group.

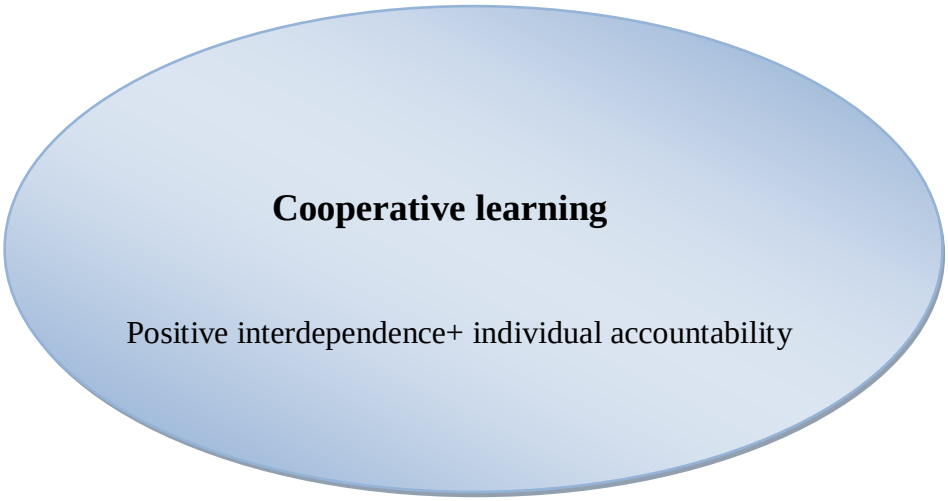
1.8.5. Group processing

The last criterion is described as productive assessment that deals with the student's feedback on the learning process, in which the group must regularly examine their function and reflection on what they still need to do to achieve their objectives. It gives sense to situation where learners take time to discuss how far they advance towards their goals and how better they learn the assigned academic content.

In fact, the purpose of group processing is to clarify the effectiveness of the group members in contributing to joint efforts to attain the group's goals. Some keys to a successful group processing are giving sufficient time for it to take place, the involvement of their social skills to help the entire group, as well as reminding learners to use their cooperative skill while they process in order to achieve an effective working relationship within the group. According to Gillies (2003:39); the small group skills that facilitate participation in CL include:

- Taking turns to present ideas and share resources.
- Sharing tasks equitably among group members.
- Resolving differences of opinion and conflict.
- Ensuring decision that affects the groups are decided democratically.

The following figure, adopted from Joliffe (2007: 4) illustrates the main of elements of CL



Small group and interpersonal skills

Element of CL

To be truly cooperative learning should consist of these elements which provide a sense of responsibility and an understanding of the importance of cooperation. According to Joliffe (2007: 4) group mates should discuss work together and help each other to understand it. This can be achieved gradually through clear teaching program. In order to use cooperative learning effectively, teachers must understand the nature of positive interdependence, individual accountability, promotive interaction, social skills and group processing and develop skills in structuring them. This allows teachers to adapt cooperative learning to their unique circumstances, needs, and students, as well as to fine-tune their use of cooperative learning to solve problems students are having in working together.

Conclusion

Developing learners autonomy implies not only willingness to take control of learning, but also the necessity to provide students with opportunities to exercise autonomy by making descions and assuming responsibility in groups for their own learning process. Cooperative learning fosters a high degree of autonomy since it gives the student the chance to work on teams to support each other and share preferences for fluffing a common learning goal. There are many learning goals that can be achieved by having students collaborate either in pairs or in small groups, in which CL can increase EFL learner's self-esteem, increase their motivation, enhance their self-confidence, reduce their anxiety and create an affective social context of learning.

In brief students can interact and learn from their own mistakes whenever they are given meaningful choices and control of their learning, in which they will choose beneficial ways to improve their own learning in the classroom, Hence, teachers than need to reflect on how to define and design the course objectives, methodology, materials, tasks and other aspect in order to foster learner's awareness, commitment and command, Indeed the development of learner autonomy does not only require the previous appropriate conditions, but also necessitates student contributes on their own in order to became an active

The following chapter is rather practical. It presents the research design of the current study. It also embodies the quantitative and qualitative analysis of the data gathered from the research instrument utilized with first year 'License' students, to end with proposing some suggestions to the issue the study has set out to answer.

Chapter Two:
Research Design and Procedures

Chapter two: Research Design and Procedure

2.1. Introduction

2.2. Case Study

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2.1. Introduction

Many years ago, it was taken for granted that the best learning class is the quiet one. Recently many teachers have been more likely to motivate students for engaging theme in cooperative learning groups that witnessed much more increased attention in which student centeredness stand on to increase higher-order learning. In order to explore the effectiveness of cooperative learning in fostering learners' autonomy in EFL classroom the instructor has opted for a certain methodology.

The second chapter is inspirationally a practical framework of this present research. ***"In its basic and simplest form, research is a way of finding out answers to question"*** **(Mackey & Gass, 2005:1**). Thus, our task is to explore the research questions, and provide solutions or explanations. In fact, this can be done only by a range of methods and tools. This chapter aims at investigating the two designed research questions that the study has set out to answer. For this reason, the investigator will attempt to present the data gathered through the data analysis procedures in a detailed and comprehensive manner.

This chapter is devoted to the analysis and interpretation of the questionnaire which have been administrated to second year students which is designed for inviting them to contribute information on their actual state of learning and an interview administrated for their teachers to provide relevant data to our study. Informants have provided very useful data that will be commented. Before doing this, it is preferable to describe the research tool.

2.2. Case Study Research

Students' poor achievements and the failure of an educational system are generally related to the quality of education instructors provide. To reach effective language teaching, tutors must possess a profound knowledge, skills and the new instructional approaches and methods. By doing so, they will update to the new challenges that face education nowadays on a one hand and discover some practical solutions to the problems faced by EFL learners in the other hand. Accordingly, cooperative learning method has been suggested as an alternative solution to many educational problems in a large number of works.

It is claimed that cooperative learning is an effective teaching method, appropriate for every subject area and every learner age. The reason why higher academic outcomes, effective development and social skills are attained when this method is being applied in the educational situations. The fact of using cooperative learning groups to foster the autonomy in EFL classroom stimulated the researcher to assess the use of this technique in higher education as a mean to promote motivation of second year undergraduate students at the University of Naama in 2018-2019 academic years. Hence, the present work discusses an exploratory case study research project, which aims at assessing cooperative learning group and how it can foster EFL students' autonomy.

Case study is merely known as "a monograph". It indicates a straightforward investigation of an entity, a group, a definite process, organization and also a phenomenon. In this respect, Yin (1993:11) defines the case study as:

> ***"It refers to an event, an entity, an individual, or even a unit of analysis. It's an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context using multiple sources of evidence".***

It is the most appropriate approach in language education research. Case study is commonly viewed as a research approach where one or a number of instances of a specific phenomenon are dealt with in depth, which provides diverse information related to the phenomenon under investigation where explanation, description and exploration enables researchers to understand the behavioral patterns of the studied

group . Eventually its results help in generalizing about an instance or from an instance to a whole group. In this case, study we have carried out a plan to be used in collecting data and finally reporting the result obtained. According to Nunan methodologically, the case study ***is "'hybrid' in that it generally utilizes a range of methods for collecting and analyzing data, rather than being restricted to a single procedure" (Nunan, 1997:74)***

Accordingly, there are three types of case study: case study according to the purpose of research, case study in terms of the number of cases, case study according to the units of analysis.

The case study according to the purpose of research includes three sub-categories: descriptive, exploratory and explanatory. Firstly, the descriptive case study focuses on describing an object of phenomenon; it gives a wider attention to the characteristics of a certain issue. It has to answer the question of "what". Secondly, the explanatory case study studies the reasons behind a definite problem. More importantly, it explains why it happens. It attempts to answer the question "why". Thirdly, the exploratory case study aims at studying a given problem, and also, undertaking a specific issue in order to look for ways through which the existing situation that can be improved and its basic is to look for patterns, hypothesis or ideas that can be tested and will form the basis for further research. It answers the question "what" and "how".

The case study according to the number of cases vividly includes single and multiple case studies. The former, focuses on one case, and it generates two kinds that are intrinsic, and instrumental. Adequately, the intrinsic case study gives much more realm to the internal component of the study itself, without giving references to the notion of generalization. On the other hand, instrumental case study attempts to discuss something general through the study of a specific case. It aims at generalizing the research findings. Moreover, the multiple case study also named as "the collective case study", denotes the study of several cases under one research background.

The case study according to the unit of analysis, this category includes holistic and object that directs the case to function as a single unit of analysis. A part from this, the embedded case study is divided into multiple units that are individual

Analyzed in a separate way to come up with unified results about the main case. Additionally, the several sub-units are commonly mirrored up to provide pieces of information about the various aspects of the case.

The researcher has opted the exploratory type of case study; its major concern is to explore the role of cooperative learning group in fostering learners' autonomy at the University of Naama. By formulating a problematic, asking two research questions, providing hypothesis and trying to test them through the collection of quantitative and qualitative data. It will do so by assessing whether cooperative learning provide opportunities to foster students' motivation and how the implementation of cooperative learning can raise student achievement for better learning process.

2.3. Research Approach

The aim of any research work is investigate existing situation, to provide solution or explanation to problems and answers to questions using any particular research approach depending on the type of research or the collected data. In fact, there are two basic approaches to research, quantitative approach and qualitative approach. The present case study has been under taken for the sake of exploring EFL students' autonomy using cooperative learning using mixed methods approach, which is a combination of both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The former carried out to collect and analyze numerical data concentrating on measuring e.g., percentages, the seal and frequency; whereas the latter is more subjective and involve examining e.g., values, attitude and perception in detailed descriptive data.

Although the two models represent two diverse approaches to empirical research, the mixture of their principles has led to the emergence of a new research approach referred to as 'mixed methods research'. This emerging approach has proved to be useful for case study research. However, in order to understand more about the mixed research approach, it is preferable to shed light on each approach (quantitative and qualitative) in isolation. Clearly, both approaches differ in many ways; each one has its own features, strengths and weaknesses. Each one can be useful than the other depending on the nature and objective of the research.

2.3.1. Quantitative Approach

Quantitative data is widely acknowledged among supporters of quantitative research because of its facility to gather information and usefulness to generalize to other contexts. Collecting data through quantitative research is generally interpreted numerically by using statistics, which involve different procedures. In this line of thoughts, Dornyei writes, ***"the single most important feature of quantitative research is, naturally, that is centered around numbers"*** **(2007:32).** The gathered quantitative data can be nominal (also named as categorical), ordinal or interval. The former denotes the inclusion of variables. For instance; race and sex. The second is the one, which is resulted from ranked questions. However, the last one (interval data) refers to values in lieu of variables. An ideal example of the present quantitative data analysis in this research study is clearly seen in close-ended questions

2.3.2. Qualitative Approach

While the term quantitative research was highlighted by a clear agreement on its facility and usefulness among proponents

> ***"Qualitative research is difficult to define clearly. It has no theory or paradigm that is distinctly its own [...] nor does qualitative research have a distinct set of methods or practices that are entirely its own".*** **(Darnyei 2007:35).**

Whereas, there are some features which describe the qualitative data analysis research involving:

- Its apparent nature which gives the examiner chances to gain a great amount of information and comprehend the complete situation of the research work being targeted.
- Its requirement for mere samples.
- Its emphasis on the researcher's own insights and experiences.
- The data gathered is transformed into words, taking the form of texts.

Consequently, .the interpretation of such a data provides the reader with adequate information instead of mere graphic representations and gives the respondents their

freedom to express their own perspectives and experiences. An instance of this type of data analysis in the present study is: open-ended questions.

What is more, analyzing qualitative data is not an easy task, because it demands from the examiner to follow some steps beginning by transforming the respondents' answers obtained from open-ended questions into texts, then trying to arrange their responses (their attitudes, opinions, etc) in a way that is workable to uncover the needed data.

The aim of qualitative research is to understand the social reality of individuals, group and cultures as nearly as possible as its participants feel it or live it. Thus, people and groups are studied in their natural setting.

Research following a qualitative approach is exploratory and seeks to explain 'how' and 'why' a particular phenomenon, or behavior, operates as it does n a particular context. A good example of a qualitative research method would be unstructured interviews, which generate qualitative data using open questions. This allows the respondents to talk in some depth, choosing their own words. This helps the researcher develop a real sense of a person's understanding of a situation.

However, several items exist in the field. The term mixed methods research is the preferred one since it refers to

> ***[...] Some sort of combination of qualitative and quantitative methods within a single research project [...] Furthermore, qualitative and quantitative principles can also be combined at the data analysis stage by 'quantifying' or 'qualitizing' the data***. **(Dornyei, 2007:45).**

Moreover, the examiner opted for the use of mixed methods. The reason lies in the fact that the strengths of one approach fulfill the weaknesses of another, and the use of both of them is significant for a better comprehending, and determination of the present educational situation.

2.4. Sampling

It is viewed that studying the whole population is a hard and complex task for researchers; therefore, it is preferable to obtain data needed from a smaller group of the total population. The process of choosing a particular entity from the wider population is referred to as sampling. This process goes through two main stages:

identifying the total population first then, choosing the sample at the second stage in order to guarantee its effectiveness and representativeness.

2.4.1. Sample Design

Research design is the set of methods and procedures used in collecting and analyzing measures of the variables specified in the research problem research. The design of a study defines the study type (descriptive, experimental, review, exploratory) and sub-type (e.g., descriptive-longitudinal case study). Research problem, hypotheses, independent and dependant variables, experimental design and if applicable data collection methods and a statistical analysis plan. Research design is the framework that has been created to find answers to research questions.

2.4.2. Sample population

As a case study, this research work shed light on the effectiveness of using cooperative learning techniques to foster students' autonomy. Therefore, the researcher has opted for a sample randomly obtained from the entire students who learn the language through cooperative learning techniques.

It is eventually acknowledged that the sample is a major tenet in any given research. Since it illuminates the tidbit of information dealt with in the partial part. Additionally, it shapes the selection of some parts of the whole population. Hence, Cohen et al. (2000:92) note that investigators ***"[...] often need to be able to obtain data from a smaller group or subset of the total population in such a way that the knowledge gained is representative of the total population under study"***.

The sample should clearly generate a set of characteristics such as representativeness, generalizability, and homogeneity. In this current research, a sample was chosen from second year License students at the department of English at Naama University. Those students have already experienced some insights of the study in groups in the first year. In fact, that they already studying together for one year at university will give learners the opportunity to undergo working in groups at least once even in other modules. Consequently, they would have a view towards it. Another advantage of already studying English for a whole year is that student experienced what kind of techniques best motivates theme. In addition, the

investigator has vividly looked out to blur the content of the course in the second year and eventually linked it to the notion of "autonomy".

To sum up, the members involved in this study are thirty (30) second year university students aged between 19 and 26 years old. They were 12 male and 18 female participants. In fact, they have received English lectures for seven years before entering the university. In the first academic year at the university, they took lessons in grammar, phonetics, linguistics, language skills (reading, listening, writing and speaking), and research methodology. Where the teacher has dealt with group work in some modules.

2.5. Instrumentation

From the centrality of any piece of research, the use of primary and secondary sources is practically endorsed into the importance of reliability and organization of the data collection phase. The secondary sources are highlighted through the theoretical background. Vivaciously, the primary sources are pictured through the research instruments utilized such as interview, classroom observation, questionnaires, journals…ect. Furthermore, in the current study the researcher has made use of a questionnaire for second year students and an interview for their teachers. Actually, using more than one research instrument allows the researcher to triangulate the findings and promise their validity. Indeed, triangulation takes place when the researcher relies on diverse sources of data to get a variety of perspective. In this vein Cohen et al. defined it as***, "the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of some aspect of human behavior" (2000:112).***

Along the same line, Woodside (2010) considers that deep understanding of case studies is achieved through the use of numerous data gathering methods i.e., triangulation which often includes (1) the examiner's direct observation of the studied site, (2) inquiring by asking the participants for justification and interpretations(3) the analysis of written documents take place in the studied case. Following the same steps, the researcher has selected a multi-method approach for data collection for the sake of giving different perspective of phenomenon.

2.5.1. Students' Questionnaire

Perhaps questionnaire is the most widely used for eliciting information from some target informants relative to their goals, attitude and background. It is basically a set of written questions that symbolize a definite inquiry sought after, in order to reach the participants' perspectives and standpoints. In addition, it's commonly regarded as the most utilized research instrument since it is easier to be designed, it gathers a large amount of data, and easier to provides qualitative and numerical data on behavior and opinions from numerous informants. As Dornyei (2007:101) pointed out : ***"the popularity of questionnaires is due to the fact that they are relatively easy to construct, extremely versatile, and capable of gathering a large amount of information, quickly in a form that is readily possible"***. Questionnaire are said to be utilized as a research instrument due to their easier design and formulation. In addition, they can truly sum up a considerable bunch of questions and items.

2.5.1.1. Aims of the Questionnaire

Raising learners' autonomy using cooperative learning techniques needs to be investigated through the collection of a remarkable amount of representative data. In order to achieve this goal, the researcher has relied on interview in addition to a questionnaire that has been designed to gather both quantitative and qualitative data.

This questionnaire is mainly designed to diagnose the students' evaluation of their skills and awareness of cooperation in-group work in the English language. Therefore, the questionnaire which was administrated to the students seeks to gather information that the learners are able to report about which reflect their beliefs, attitude, behavior and the way they react toward their learning, and to investigate their actual state of learning in group works.

2.5.1.2. The Questionnaires' Description

The questionnaire has been selected by the examiner as a research instrument since it represents a great source of information and ***"[...] are useful for collecting data from large groups of subjects".*** Seliger and Shohamy (2000:124). Students' questionnaire mainly aims at investigating the students' attitudes and perceptions of cooperative learning as applied by their teachers, and whether they benefited from it. The questionnaire is wholly made up of 20 items classified under two parts each one

focuses on a particular aspect. The items required answers with dichotomies (yes / no question),or picking up the most appropriate answer from a series of option, or open questions asking the students to give their opinions.

2.5.2. Teacher's interview

In order to broaden the scope of research we have added an interview. Broadly speaking, an interview can be described as, ***"the elicitation of data by one person from another through person-to- person encounters" (Nunan, 1997, p.231).*** However, interviews come in many different forms; they range from unstructured, semi-structured to structured interviews. The choice of a given type is determined by the nature of the research and the degree of control the interviewer wishes to exert (Ibid). In fact, there are many forms of interviewing such as focus group interviews, telephone interviews and e-mail interviews, but the one that is used in this case study is one-to-one interview in which the researcher asks question and records answers from one participant in the study. The structured interview consists of a list of set questions in a predetermined order prepared previously by the researcher and administrated to all the respondents in the same order and format.

In this study, the researcher has opted for a structured interview, as data gathering tools. One of the main advantages of a structured interview is that gives the interviewer a degree of power and control over the course of the interview. Besides, misunderstanding, or lack of understanding, can be immediately sorted out during the exchange of information.

2.5.2.1. Aims of the Interview

In order to gather data from diverse sources, the present interview was designed for teachers for the sake of highlighting the teachers' expectations from using cooperative technique, and their assessment of the students' motivation to learn English while working with groups.

The main aim of the interview was to provide the researcher with in-depth understanding of the teachers' perceptions of learner's autonomy and how it can be fostered through the application of cooperative learning techniques.

The interview served also as a way to validate the students' answers previously stated in the questionnaire.

The combination of a questionnaire and interview can help the two tools complement each other and enhance the possibility of obtaining both quantitative and qualitative data. Questionnaires and interviews are thus often used in complementary fashion. Questionnaires may be followed up for in –depth interviews, so that ideas may be explored more thoroughly.

2.4.2.2. Description of the Interview

After selecting the structured type of the interview, five teachers were asked to answer eight open-ended questions related to their perception towards cooperative learning technique and how it can help raising learners' autonomy. The interview was conducted with five teachers.

2.6. Data Analysis and Interpretation

In order to gain a comprehensive insight of the research, data analysis crystallizes the plausible findings of the study that are elaborately analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. The former involves basically the use of descriptive statistics that reflect percentages and graphic representations. Whereas, the latter denotes a realistic background of all answers required, and more importantly the content they provide. Reasonably, the two types are tidily related to each other in the process followed in any given research since ***" using more than one type of analysis is believed to provide more reliable research findings since the latter are not compressed into a single dimension of measurement" (Hamzaoui 2006 : 130)***

2.7. Analysis of the questionnaire:

At this stage, the researcher opted for the use of questionnaire, which was prepared in advance before the holiday and administrated to the student in participants' lecture to make sure they will hand it back.

The following is a treatment of the data obtained from such research tool. It is paramount to mention that each item of students' questionnaire will be analyzed separately quantitatively and qualitatively in a detailed way so as to synthesize the data and arrive at the results and conclusions of the present research work.

- **Section one: "Background Information"**

The first section deals with background information about the students in order to provide us with perspectives on the learners 'learning, so we can anticipate the way how the responses will be like and to get clear statistics.

- ✓ **Item One:** Gender distribution

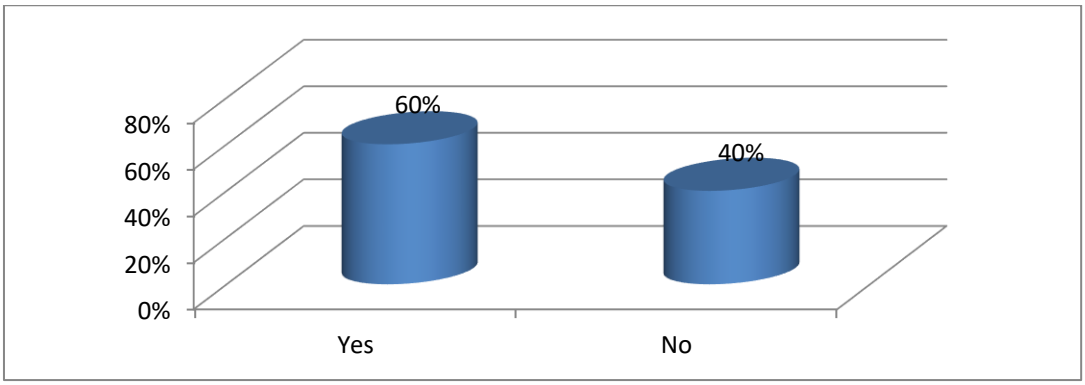
Gender	**Male**	**Female**
Number of participants	12	18
Percentage	40%	60%

Table 1: Gender distribution of the students.

A quick glance at this table will reveal that female students outnumber male. In fact, the majority of the population is female, which resembles (60%) of the total sample. Whereas (40%) of the participants are males.

- **Section two: Students' perceptions of cooperative group work**

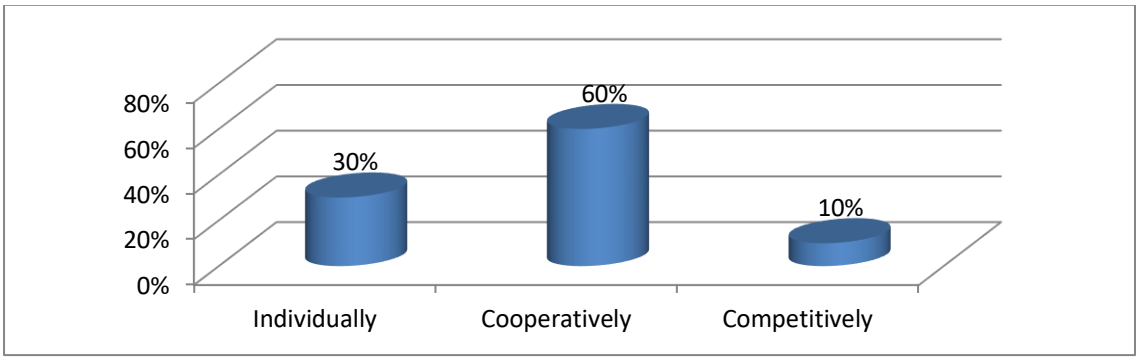
- ✓ **Item One:** Are you given the chance to be more responsible in organizing learning and setting goals?



Bar Graph 2.1.Learners' organizing learning and setting goals

This question attempts to know whether students are given the opportunity to take charge and systematize their learning process or not. Actually, those informants hold a positive attitudes towards being more responsible in organizing their learning and setting goals. As far as the results are concerned, the majority of learners representing 60% of the present sample population appeared to hold positive attitudes. As opposed a ratio of 20% who believe the contrary.

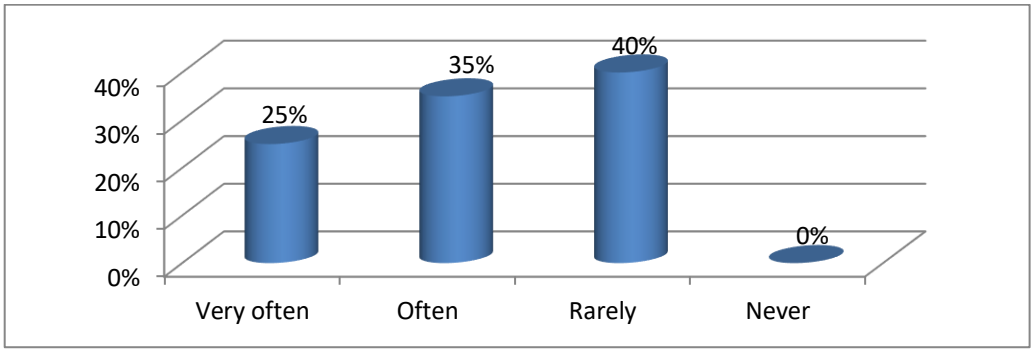
✓ **Item Two:** Do you prefer learning?



Bar Graph 2.2.Learners' Preference

When being asked about whether they prefer to work individually, in pairs or in small groups. Our aim was to see the kind of instruction students' prefer. A ratio of (30%) contended that they like to work individually; the majority (60%) reported that working collaboratively is the suitable method for them when learning. On the other hand, a minority of three educators, representing (10%), admitted working in pairs.

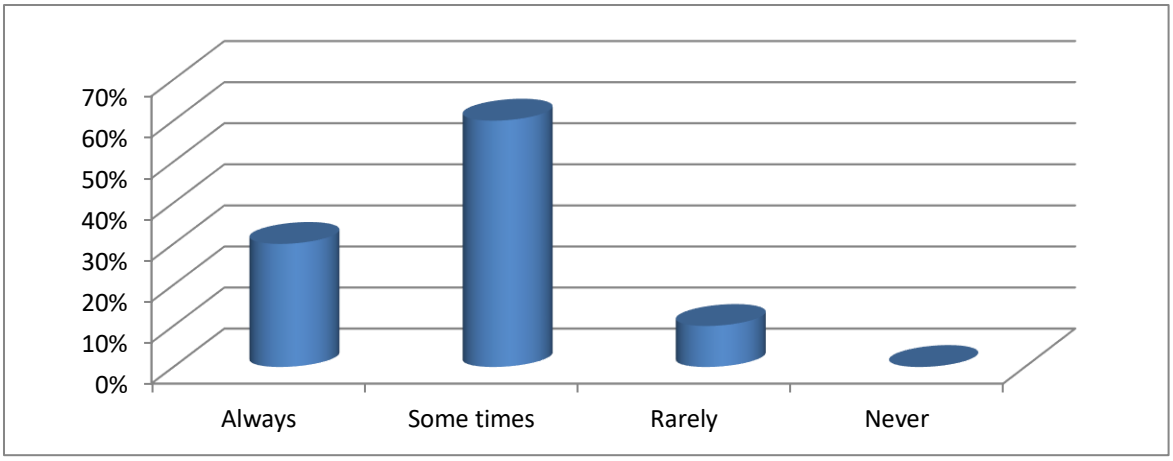
✓ **Item Three:** how often does the teacher assign group work?



Bar-Graph 2.3. Group work assignment

This question was asked as a trial to uncover the frequency of using cooperative group work by EFL teachers. The data show that a great proportion of learners confirmed that their instructors use group work either often (35%) or rarely a ratio of (40%). However, seven respondents, that is, (25%) from the whole requested educators reported that their tutors always make use of collaborative work. With regard to the item "never" none of the students a ratio of (00%) stated that their teachers never apply cooperative learning method when learning.

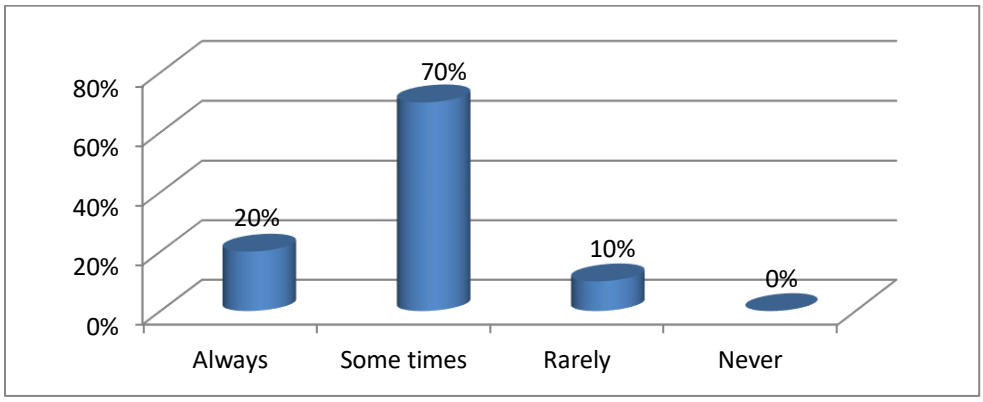
✓ **Item Four:** how often do you participate with your classmates to accomplish learning task?



Bar-Graph 2.4 learners' position towards group accomplishment

This question inquired about the contribution of the student with his classmates to accomplish a common learning task. The above bar-Graph paves the way to provide a clear distinction between the students' responses. Additionally, the majority of participants(60%) claim that they are committed to participate with the other peers to accomplish the task for the success of their common aim.(30%) reflects their concern and responsibility as integrators by sharing resources, help, support, encourage, and praise each other's efforts to learn. Both academic and personal supports are part of this mutual goal. On the other hand, only a ratio of (10%) stated that they are rarely included in the group interaction.

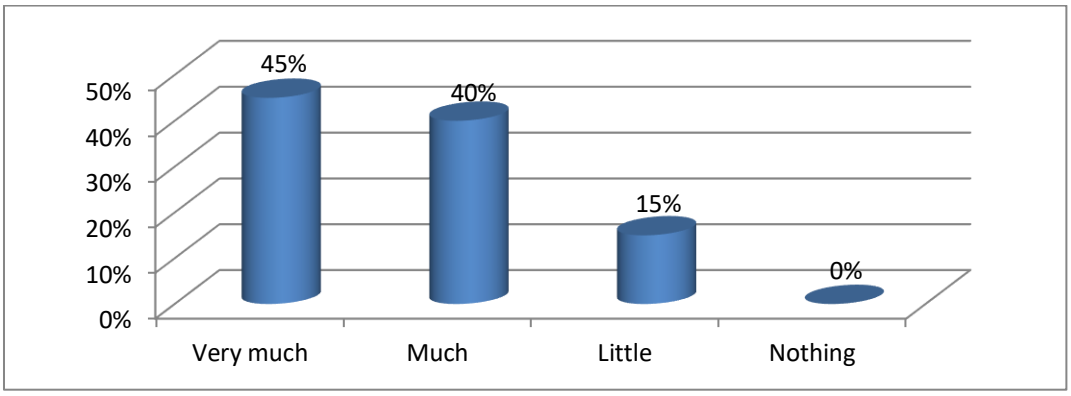
- ✓ **Item five:** do you feel responsible during the group work?



Bar-Graph 2.5.Learner's commitment to the success of the group

The participants‟ response was as follows: Most of the participants (70%) state that they sometimes feel responsible and take part during the group work. This indicates that this way of learning helps our students much in their learning, and that they benefit from it with varying degrees. In this vein, we mention that (20%) always being responsible. However, a significant number of our respondents (10%) admit that they rarely engage with their peers in the group, but no one claim that they never take responsibility during group work.

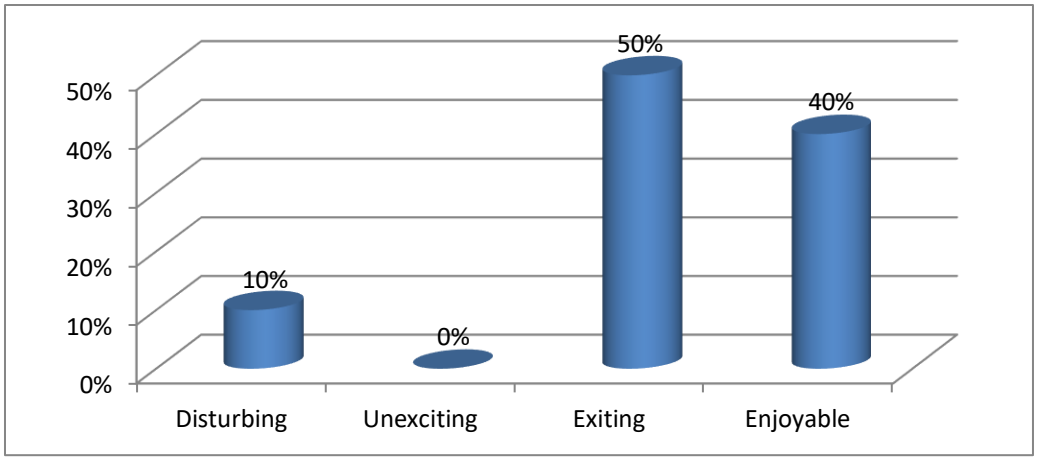
- ✓ **Item Six:** how much do you learn from cooperative work?



Bar-Graph 2.6.Amount of learning when working cooperatively

The participants' response was as follows: Most of the participants (45%) state that they leant a lot through the use of group work. This indicates that this way of learning helps our students much in their learning, and they benefit from it with varying degrees. In this vein, we mention that (40%) learn much. However, a significant number of our respondents (15%) admit that they learn a little, but a ratio of (00%) claims that they learn nothing from group work. We can say that this result depends on the level of the student in learning. It can be said that working in groups in beneficial to many students and motivate them for learning and setting goals.

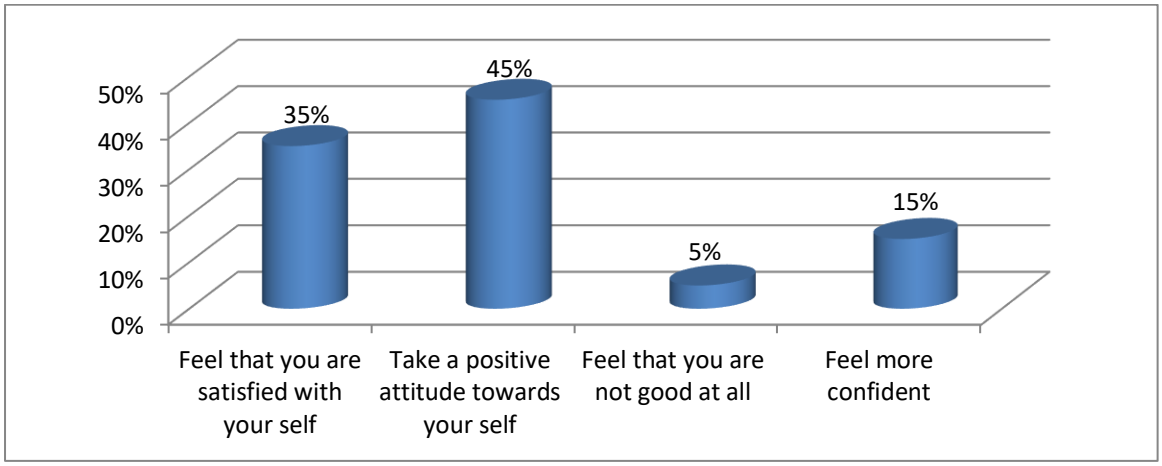
- ✓ **Item seven:** how would you describe the process of working in cooperative groups?



Bar-Graph 2.7.Learners' attitude towards working cooperatively

According to this data introduced in bar-graph, the participants were asked to describe how they feel when working in groups. As the results shown on the table, the students' perspectives towards describing the process of working together were summarized into two positive adjectives namely; exiting and enjoyable closing ratio between (50%) and (40%). They find group work as the foundation of motivation which gives them the opportunity to express themselves freely. A minority of (10%) Claim that the process of working with their peers in groups in disturbing for theme whereas no one states that working cooperatively is unexciting.

✓ **Item eight:** when you work in groups, do you:

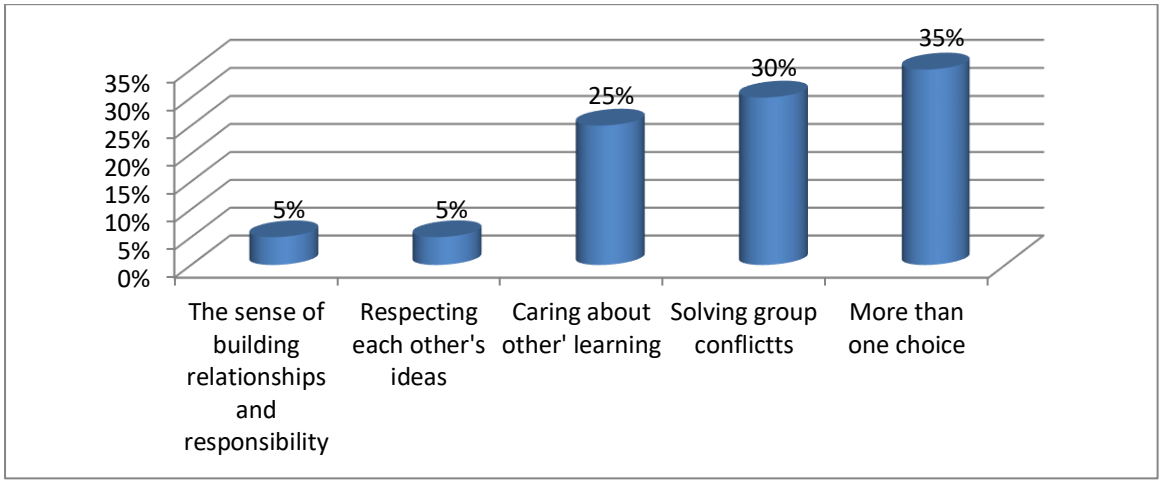


Bar-Graph 2.8.learners' feeling when working in groups

It is preferable to ask students about their perceptions towards learning in groups, since; the basic tenet of this research is to evaluate its role in promoting autonomous

learning among second year license students. Vividly, a great number of students (45%) have clearly pictured that they feel satisfied with themselves when they are engaged in working in cooperative groups. The result also indicated that confidence is fairly raised in a quite number of our participants (15%). Some other participants who present (35%) of the whole sample, have a positive attitude towards themselves when they work with their peers cooperatively. For sure, all students make mistakes and sharing the same thing can make them feel less embarrassed. Feeling of self-satisfaction indicates that these students contribute to the group and are recognized by other peers. Minority of (5%) claim that cooperative learning does not make them feel good at all.

- ✓ **Item nine:** what skills you have learnt when working in groups? (You can tick more than one box).



Bar-Graph 2.9.learners'skills when learning cooperatively

Educators alluded to cooperative learning as an advantageous method because it allowed them to learn a set range of skills; the sense of building relationship among students and respecting each other's ideas whatever their gender, origin or educational background is. The data introduced in the graph show that (30%) of the students they integrate to solve group conflict, others (25%) caring about others' learning. A ratio of (5%) both for building relationships among students and responsibility and respecting each other's ideas. While the majority of the participants (35%) select more than one

choice. In fact, it is of a great value to find that the majority of students' are aware of the sense of responsibility and being more responsible for their own learning.

- ✓ **Item ten:** how would you describe your relationship with your partners?

This question is posed to know the state of learners' relationship with their classmates. Generally, the respondents' answers were almost the same; they stated that their relationship between their peers is respectful, beneficial especially when they work in groups. This social dimension helped them build their self-esteem, be responsible, distribute the workload, make better decisions, create involvement and a sense of belonging, and reinforce individual capabilities during the development of their common goal, they were aware of their learning process.

- ✓ **Item eleven:** what makes you an autonomous learner in the classroom?

This question intended to attract the learners' attention in order to find out their opinions about the appropriate techniques or methods for fostering their autonomy in the classroom. It helps to solve the students' problems, the difficulties they encountered and proposals to improve their learning. In this vein, Learner autonomy is undoubtedly important in language teaching. It is as much a skill as learning to drive, it must be taught, and it requires some practice. Moreover, promoting learners' autonomy would be useful in helping teachers to promote it in their classes, so that the language proficiency level will gradually progress, this require diverse techniques and teaching styles as the students' response to this question, which they propose different answers. Most of the participants agree on the teachers' technique in developing the course. Good topics, the atmosphere of the class, home works, and project they believe that it helps to promote their autonomy. The other prefers practicing the language orally and the implication of technological devises. Working in groups was the most repeated answer, which reveals that students have a positive attitude toward working cooperatively for raising their level of autonomy and accomplish their common goal.

Generally, through the analysis of the students‟ answers, it is quite clear that the students are highly motivated to use cooperative learning, they think that the application of cooperative learning would be helpful in fostering their autonomy; therefore, this means that the students have a positive attitude towards this technique

2.8. Analysis of teachers' interview

The interview constructively aims at collecting the basic tit bit of information about working cooperatively and its relation to the notion of autonomy in language learning. It was distributed to five teachers who are particularly teaching second year license students. Consequently, all teachers have given back their interview. Briefly, the investigator has noticed a plausible variety of answers that may be effective in the data analysis phase.

- ✓ **Item one:** how long have you been teaching English language?

From this answers of the teachers, we deduce that the extent of teachers' experience in teaching English differ from five years to ten years. This indicates that our respondents have diverse knowledge and experience.

- ✓ **Item tow:** do you face the problem of learners' autonomy?

The major target behind this question was to discover the possible difficulties that may students face in the classroom. Among which learners' autonomy, all teacher shares the same opinion "yes». Actually, they stated that their students have problems with increasing their level and being autonomous. The teachers acknowledged that cultural factor and beliefs govern the students' opinions towards the learning process, they believe that the teacher is supposed to provide every single information to them. In addition, the students' laziness and low motivation affect negatively their own progress. Another opinion revealed that, the majority of university students are not aware of major responsibilities that could be held by a "student", by keeping the traditional vision of simply a secondary school pupil.

- ✓ **Item three:** how do you promote your learners autonomy?

This question highlighted the types of assignments given with the aim of promoting the sense of autonomy among students. The teachers have elaborately advocated that doing research on interesting topics can increase the students' desire and self-reliance as well. Individual work could be pictured up in terms of portfolios or written presentations. In addition, students can consult different electronic and printed courses independently. Other teachers stated that interactions, debate, discussion increase his learners' level of motivation. While

others think that through moral support, student can actively engaged in the learning process like encouragements, caring about theme. However, they all shared the same answer, which is using group work, or pair work that they think in the suitable solution for raising their learners' autonomy.

- ✓ **Item four:** do you use cooperative learning to enhance self-directed learning?

The responses given by the teachers allowed us to know if the teachers are applying the cooperative method in teaching or using other methods. The answers demonstrate that the teachers make use of cooperative learning technique in teaching. Thus, their major aim was to stress self-government in which the learner is engaged to be more responsible. Moreover, providing opportunities for language learners to receive comprehensible input and produce comprehensible output. These opportunities are given in a meaningful context in which the learner is motivated to perceive the language not just as an academic subject, but also as an instrument for expression and comprehension in a foreign language context.

- ✓ **Item five:** do you think that cooperative learning enhance students' motivation?

The respondents' responses were approximately the same; they all think that the use of cooperative learning in fostering learners' motivation has many benefits .Each of them expresses those major benefits in different ways. They are listed as follow:

- They ameliorate their performance by motivating each other, and exchange ideas.
- It reduces stress and competition; the students are responsible for their work and progress.
- Cooperative learning helps students to acquire new vocabulary, and CL motivates students through engaging them in their learning process.
- CL improves positive competition, self-confidence, and overcome shyness .And also reduces students' anxiety as well as improves students‟ interaction".

Overall, the teachers' responses demonstrate that almost all of them agree that cooperative learning has benefits, which help students in developing different skills, so the teachers believe that cooperative learning is a helpful method.

- ✓ **Item six:** for which modules go you make use of cooperative learning?

For this question, teachers make use of cooperative learning technique in different modules among them: oral expression –grammar-written expression-applied linguistics-ICT in education and didactics.

These responses denote that teachers are using cooperative learning technique in almost of the modules of the English department.

- ✓ **Item seven:** rather than autonomy, what are the benefits of using cooperative learning in the class?

The major target behind this question was to discover the other possible benefits of using cooperative learning in the class rather than fostering learners' autonomy. The majority of Teachers' responses were as follow: Cooperative Learning is particularly beneficial for any student learning a second language. CL activities promote peer interaction, which helps the development of language and the learning of concepts and content. Learners will have the opportunity to express themselves with greater confidence when working in small teams. In addition to 'picking up' vocabulary and they benefit from observing how their peers learn and solve problems.

- ✓ **Item eight:** relying on your classroom experience, what suggestions would you make to help students promoting their autonomous learning in and outside classroom?

The main target of this question was to highlight the different perspectives of teachers to give suggestions to promote learners' autonomy in the class. Obviously, autonomous learners are perceived to possess unique characteristics that make them independent, self-efficient, and willing to take the risk and responsibility of relying more on themselves than on others .Teachers' suggestion are listed as follow:

- Do research by themselves and encouraging individual research to be autonomous rather than always being spoon fed by their teachers.
- Using ICT to change the atmosphere and make the session more enjoyable for learning.
- Using collaborative project to receive and produce comprehensible output
- Students are motivated to help one another learn if the teacher creates opportunities for that.
- Reading and writing as alternative suggestion to promote their autonomy.

2.9. Data Interpretation:

In fact, teachers' interview was of a paramount role in helping the researcher to collect valuable information about teachers' methods in fostering learners' autonomy, their strategies in gathering students to work in groups. The present questionnaire gave the researcher the chance to interpret the central believe leading the present research work.

Regarding the first hypothesis which states that autonomy may be considered as a basic tenet of any given learning context, all teachers to whom the interview were addressed argued that the notion of autonomy symbolized a key factor of a successful learner who manages his learning bits and pieces. In addition, independent learning is not basically a total separation from the teachers' guidance and assistance, but it indicates the ability of students to develop their skills and abilities outside the classroom setting. Moreover, the majority of students stated several advantages of being an independent learner like: the improvement of their proficiency level and their eagerness to go beyond what is taught to them during the lectures. It increases also their motivation and creativity by being exposed to extra sources of knowledge. Consequently, the first hypothesis was confirmed.

Concerning the second hypothesis which stipulates that cooperative learning may provide students with the opportunity to promote their autonomy. The teachers emphasized that the study using group work help students develop their learning skills and achieve high level in learning. Additionally, the implication of CL in diverse modules paves the way for learners to acquire and grasp some basic strategies such as: working in groups, and using their background schemata to deal with their current pieces of research. Moreover, reading and witting techniques help students enhance their proficiency level. Furthermore, cooperative learning technique stressed the importance of self-direct learning, taking into account the students' own responsibilities in the learning process. These results confirmed the second hypothesis.

2.10. Suggestions and Recommendations

In the light of the findings and the conclusion of this research work, some recommendations are suggested for both teachers and students to remove the conflict that is common about cooperative learning, for that reason we suggested the following recommendations:

Since autonomy seems to be the most important feature in the learning process, teacher should:

- Devote an ample time for helping student to get used to the cooperative learning through using small-groups technique from time to time just a part of the lesson to avoid monotony of teaching.
- Teachers should provide more opportunities for students to interact, communicate, share and exchange ideas in real classroom situation.
- Teachers' role should be changed from being the main source of teaching process to that of facilitating, guiding managing, supporting and encouraging.
- When arranging students in groups it should not be done randomly, take into consideration students' gender, level, and even their personalities, to avoid noise, imposing point of view, or any kind of students' personal conflict.
- Develop students' self-confidence and reduce their anxiety by avoiding direct and harsh comments' (negative feedback).

Recommendation for students:

- Try to practice more the language inside and outside the classroom.
- Try to participate more in the classroom even if you got the wrong answer, because mistakes are part of the learning process.
- Do not be shy to ask for clarification when needed either from your teacher or your classmates.
- Believe in your abilities, be patient, and do not think negatively.

Conclusion

The second chapter is devoted mainly t the description of the research design, instruments and population. It also reports the analysis and interpretation of the data collected from the questionnaire with second year Licence degree, and an interview that was administrated to their teachers.

The main findings revealed that both teachers and learners are fully aware of the pivotal role of autonomy in language learning sphere. In addition, cooperative learning is generally regarded as a concrete starting point towards independent learning. To conclude this chapter, two points worth mentioning; first the interview fulfilled its aim of providing further insight into teachers' views about their perception of teachers' autonomy, and their attitudes towards cooperative learning. Their responses complemented the ones obtained via the students' questionnaire. Second, teachers revealed that cooperative learning is helpful technique in fostering learners' autonomy. Consequently, a confirmation of the hypotheses in obtained via teachers' responses. The teachers' standpoints towards the use of CL in EFL classes confirm positive attitudes that state encouragement to adopt it as it helps the learner to share the learning with others peers as well as ideas and develop social skills. In this paradigm, our participants confirm the first hypothesis through their opinions within the questionnaire and through experience in their field. According to the teachers' responses, our teachers have positive attitudes towards the use of CL in their classes to enhance learners' level to accomplish their academic goals

General Conclusion

This dissertation has primarily attempted to examine to what extent cooperative learning technique is effective to foster Second Year LMD students of the English department at Naama University center. It has equally been targeted towards checking whether EFL teachers rely on this instructional method when learning or not. In this vein, the investigator attempted to test the hypotheses the study has talked, at the same time raised both teachers' and learners' awareness of the usefulness of CL. The application of this method is essential for promoting learners' autonomy because it creates a situation where learners are expected to take charge of learning and set goals.

An exploratory type of case study was chosen to investigate systematically a randomly selected sample of (30) LMD2 EFL students. In fact, two research instruments have been utilized including questionnaire administrated to their autonomy students and an interview prepared for their teacher in collecting data both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Learners' positive attitude towards learning English gave birth to the student's awareness of the learning of this language. Learner autonomy is undoubtedly important in language teaching because it is as much a skill as learning to drive, it must be taught, it requires a practice.Morover, this investigation highlight students preferences of working in groups to enhance their autonomy, besides to their feeling which demonstrated higher motivation when joining efforts. The analysis of the data obtained from the different research instruments pointed the opportunities that CL offered, which creates interactional atmosphere where learners' are expected to discuss and argue, exchange ideas and activate their background knowledge in which the students became more conformable, confident and responsible since they overcome their difficulties and obstacle, their shyness and anxiety.

The obtained results from the existing research have provided a valuable insight that confirmed our hypotheses. Teachers are aware of the effectiveness of the application of cooperative learning and the majority of the students show a positive attitude towards working in groups to improve their level, and they agreed that cooperative learning is a very effective strategy that helps the students to develop

This research work open door for further research since, the implementation of cooperative learning may comprise some negative aspects like students' noise in groups or students' conflicting ideas. Both teacher and student have to help each others to avoid such difficulties. This study is significant because we believe that the application of cooperative learning is very important for developing student's self-reliance and improve their level in which learners' centeredness stand on.

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Appendixes

Appendix A

Students' Questionnaire

Dear respondents,

For the sake of investigating the role of cooperative learning (learning in groups) in developing learner's autonomy, this questionnaire is designed. Therefore, you are kindly requested to answer the following questionnaire by putting a tick in the appropriate box or expressing your comment where necessary.

Thank you for your collaboration.

Part one

Age:

Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐

Part two

1. Are you given the chance to be more responsible in organizing learning and setting goals?

Yes ☐ No ☐

2. Do you prefer learning?

- Individually ☐
- Cooperatively ☐
- Competitively ☐

3. How often does the teacher assign group work?

- Very often ☐
- Often ☐
- Rarely ☐
- Never ☐

4. How often do you participate with your classmates to accomplish learning task?

- Always ☐
- Some times ☐
- Rarely ☐
- Never ☐

5. Do you feel responsible during the group work?

- Always ☐
- Some times ☐
- Rarely ☐
- Never ☐

6. How much do you learn from cooperative group work?

- Very much ☐
- Much ☐
- Little ☐
- Nothing ☐

7. How would you describe the process of working in cooperative groups?

- Disturbing ☐
- Unexciting ☐
- Exiting ☐
- Enjoyable ☐

8. When you work in groups, do you:

- Feel that you are satisfied with your self ☐
- Take a positive attitude towards your self ☐
- Feel that you are not good at all ☐
- Feel more confident ☐

9. What skills you have leant when working in groups? (You can tick more than one box)

- The sense of building relationships among students and responsibility ☐
- Respecting each other's ideas ☐
- Caring about others' learning ☐
- Solving group conflicts ☐

10. How would you describe your relationship with your partners?

……

……

11. What makes you an autonomous learner in the classroom?

……

…….

Appendix B

Teachers' Interview

Dear teacher,

This interview seeks to collect information about the use of cooperative learning to foster second year students' autonomy to learn English. It is, also an attempt to know what other achievement toward the application of this technique on the learners' outcomes. Thus, you are kindly invited to answer the following questions sincerely for they are significant for the success of this work.

****

1. How long have you been teaching English?

2. Do you face the problem of learners' autonomy in the classroom?

3. How do you promote your learners' autonomy?

4. Do you use cooperative learning to enhance self-directed learning?

5. Do you think that cooperative learning enhance students' autonomy?

6. For which modules do you make use of cooperative learning?

7. Rather than autonomy, what are the benefits of using cooperative learning in the class?

8. Relying on your classroom experience, what suggestions would you make to help students promoting their autonomous learning in and outside classroom?