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**Group Work as a Tool to Enhance Learners’
Critical Thinking**
**(The case of Third Year Students at SAIDI Khalfallah
High School- Saida-)**

Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Literature and English Language in
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DEDICATION

Dedicated to the strongest person I know: me

To the most amazing parents on planet.

To my beautiful sisters Khadidja and Wahida.

To my little brother "Hami"

For and to my amazing husband "Hocine " for his endless love, and support.

To my bestie "Khalida"

To my second family " Boudaouad "

Amira

Abstract: Group work allows learners to develop a range of critical thinking, analytical and communication skills. Furthermore, effective group work enhances appreciation and respect for other views, techniques and problem-solving methods, all of which enhance active learning and promote learners' learning. This paper intends to show the importance of group work in the didactic and pedagogical customs in language teaching and learning with the aim of improving learners' performance as well as exploring their perceptions of working in groups so as to promote their critical thinking. This work has been carried out during tutorial time with third year foreign languages learners undertaking a reading comprehension session in their second term where the main aim is to investigate whether group work learning can help learners gain a deeper understanding of the content and whether it could help them to develop their critical and analytical thinking skills. The group work session was conducted over two hours where evaluation surveys were collected at the end of the intervention.

List of Abbreviations

BAC: (Baccalauréat)

CBA: Competency Based Approach

CG: Control Group

CLT: Communicative Language Teaching

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

EG: Experimental Group

ELT: English Language Teaching

ESL: English as a Second Language

FDA: Food and Drugs Administration

FLT: Foreign Language Teaching

Interpol: International Police

NICT: New Information and Communication Technology

UNICEF: United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

WCO: World Customs Organization

WHO: World Health Organization

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I. GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Critical thinking is one of the most difficult and complex cognitive tasks since it presents a vital skill for learners' success as well as particular difficulties that contribute to reinforcing the failure of learners. Improving critical thinking is an obvious benefit for learners as it is encouraging learners to build awareness, understanding and control of their thought processes. It's all about getting learners to think critically about their own learning.

Moreover, everyone needs to have an ability to solve problems throughout their lives. Therefore, many educational experts have stressed on the importance of instilling higher order thinking skills in one's education as it helps learners to analyze the situation, learn the tasks better before emerge with solution both in academic and non-academic circumstances (Chance, 1986; Tama, 1989; Ennis, 1992; Elder & Paul, 2001,). This is because thinking and learning are interrelated as one has to independently think and seek solutions to a problem or situation in order to gain knowledge. Research findings indicate that critical thinking skill can be taught and improved in everyone and this skill should be integrated in the curriculum at all levels (Grant, 1988; Paul et al., 1989; White, Burke, 1992; McKendree et al., 2002).

Following our observations, made during a few assisted sessions with the learners of the third year foreign languages at SaidiKhalfallah Secondary School, we noticed that these difficulties lead the learners to develop inappropriate naive conceptions and to resort to inappropriate information processing strategies. Yet, learners interact and perform better while working in small groups.

We also stressed that generally, the help offered by the teachers in the presence of documentary exhibition texts and in particular in the 3rd year class, consists in facilitating the treatment of the linguistic level by the reformulation and the exploitation; On the contrary, we suppose that the most effective means of remediation would be that of allowing the learners, by themselves, to enrich the scientific content of the text in question by restoring it in the form of a short summary and that within a group.

From this situation arises the interest of the present research which aims at evaluating the effect of the collaborative work as a type of help to the understanding of a scientific documentary text proposed to the learners of the third year foreign languages. This help consists of a rewrite of the initial text in the form a short summary simplifying its content.

In other words, we will try through this research to question and verify by experience the contribution of collaborative work (via rewriting a text within learners' own words) on critical thinking.

Our interest in the activity of reading comprehension is summarized in the following reasons:

At first glance, understanding meaning is an activity that seems permanent and unavoidable throughout this process of specialized training because learners are faced with lessons that provide scientific subjects and deliver their courses texts

In addition, the pre-survey investigations show an underdeveloped handicap in the learners' level of comprehension by teachers on the one hand and by the learners themselves on the other hand. Regarding the collaborative work, during a few sessions we attended with these learners, we noticed that the learners were spontaneously two or three to answer the different instructions. As for the summaries, they were chosen as the task to be performed during the experiment in relation to restating the text, offer a more complex analysis and illustrate supporting evidence. Our goal is to study the impact of collaborative work (through restating a text) on the improvement of learners' critical thinking. Thus, this leads to formulate our main problematic:

- 1-Does collaborative work promote learners' critical thinking?
- 2-How can collaborative work address the difficulties of understanding texts proposed to learners of third year foreign languages?

According to the above research questions, two main hypotheses have been formulated:

- 1- Collaborative work promotes learners' critical thinking
- 2- The collaborative construction of texts would foster the existence of sociocognitive conflicts necessary to bring out a collective intelligence that can generate knowledge and consequently the understanding of the scientific text.

The present experiment aims on the one hand to highlight the new issues involved in the activity of teaching / learning based on the active construction of knowledge and access to autonomy. And on the other hand to understand the cognitive behaviour of a learner in a situation of understanding with the help of different representations and his ability to rewrite and restate text in order to make its reading comprehensible and accessible.

We considered it necessary to articulate the presentation of our work around three chapters, after a general introduction which will present our field of investigation, our problematic and our hypothesis:

The first chapter aims to provide some theoretical insights on some concepts constituting the conceptual tools appropriate to the analysis will naturally be devoted to the three key concepts of this research work, we were interested at first glance, in this chapter, foreign languages teaching situation evolution in Algeria. Then we are focused on highlighting critical thinking, characteristics and difficulties encountered by learners. Finally, we will complete our chapter with collaborative work that offers a considerable remedy to learning difficulties for learners in difficulty and that are considered an effective way to actively build their knowledge as well as some research on the scope of use of concept maps and collaborative work.

The second chapter is devoted to a detailed presentation of the general methodology of the study: the objectives, the methodological tools, the subjects of investigation, the experimental procedure, the instructions and the method of analysis of the learners' productions.

As for the third and last chapter, we will present the analysis and interpretation of the results obtained.

II. Chapter I: On the Notions of critical thinking and group work

II.1. Introduction:

Critical thinking has been recently introduced and gained a high position in foreign language teaching (FLT) settings so that nowadays improving critical thinking in learners is considered one of the important tasks for foreign language's teachers. Many different factors are involved with learners' critical thinking skills. Group work used in the classroom is among these factors. This chapter deals with the claim that through the variant types of group works, foreign language's teachers can help learners develop critical thinking skills.

II.2. Exploring the notion of critical thinking

As described in the General Introduction of this thesis, this research explores the notion of critical thinking and of group work in the context of 3rd year secondary. The following are a definition of the concepts critical thinking and group work, as well as description of the aspects of each concept.

II.2.A. Definition of Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is a rich concept that has various overlapping definitions. Yet, there is not much difference among these definitions. This variety can make it difficult for researchers and teachers to understand or agree on the key components of good critical thinking as these difficulties may impede their ability to construct an integrated theoretical account of how best to train learners critical thinking skills.

The Critical Thinking Community defined critical thinking as "the intellectually disciplined process of actively and skilfully conceptualizing, applying, analysing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action" (Scriven & Paul, 2007, p. 1). Moreover, Moon stated that "critical thinking is a capacity to work with complex ideas whereby a person can make effective provision of evidence to justify a reasonable judgment. The evidence, and therefore the judgment, will pay appropriate attention to context". Moon (2008, p.7).

Critical thinking has also been referred to as metacognition (Tempelaar, 2006) or the process of "thinking about thinking" as defined and originally purposed by Flavell (1979). In addition, Patterson (2011) defined critical thinking as the use of information logically and in a sequential manner. Furthermore, he developed a flowchart 1

(Figure 1) to help guide the process of critical thinking by applying it to a contention or a problem. When the mind faces contention the decision is made whether to reason or to object. Based on this decision, the process proceeds to what Patterson calls an expert opinion. The thinking process includes a certain level of reasoning based on the information gathered during the process.

Critical thinking according to Patterson (2011) includes six stages. Each stage is unique and requires learners to process the information differently. The first stage begins with research to help begin building the argument. The second stage is structure; during this stage the logical of statement is examined. The third stage is when the assumptions are dissected. The assumption stage is a very important to the achievement of the process, and it requires analysis to identify all assumptions found. The fourth stage is called the evidence stage where backup information is gathered to support the idea or claim. After the information is gathered, the process enters into the evaluation stage. This is the inspection stage and requires the careful look at all evidence. This inspection is what will be leading the critical thinking process to the judgment stage. During the next stage, i.e. judgement, learners will use their evaluation skill to make a decision. The last stage in the process is communication where the judgment is communicated to the appropriate person. This process is invaluable to the development of critical thinking skills. Finally, critical thinking requires a certain level of flexibility during the performance of the processes mentioned previously as critical thinking is a cognitive process in nature. (Patterson, 2011).

One aspect of critical thinking, which often goes unstated but is an element of most importance for cognitive development, is the ability to apply skills in a flexible and relevant manner to a situation that is entirely new. This does not mean merely being open-minded and willing to change one's views based on good reasoning as an evidence; but rather, it is about being able to take what, and how, one have learned elsewhere and apply it in a new situation. (Patterson, 2011, p.40)

II.2.B. Teaching Critical Thinking

Teaching critical thinking involves breaking down the process or thinking of it as a number of steps. Each step needs to be explained and practiced explicitly and learners need to be given opportunity for undertaking this practice as part of formative assessment (Tittle 2011). Although the steps can be taught, the actual process of thinking cannot. The academic needs to take the role of facilitator instead of instructor in supporting learners to develop an explicit understanding of the critical thinking process. They then, need to allow time for learners to practice and to receive feedback (Black 2009).

It is also necessary to remember that critical thinking can initially be a confronting process. Therefore, teaching critical thinking should involve two parts:

1) Provide learners with a critical thinking protocol or process (Table 1)

2) Provide opportunities for learners to apply this process. (Figure)

Figure 1 and Table 1 each outline five parts of a scaffold approach to critical thinking that is also reflected in the **Deakin Graduate Learning Outcome Minimum Standards**. These separate parts are commonly discussed in the literature, although the number of steps and classifications vary.

According to Brookfield, setting up any initial learning task that elicits critical thinking should:

- be small so as not to overwhelm learners
- focus on a single step in the critical thinking process at time
- further steps can then be built into the teaching process
- be non-threatening, i.e. should not include confronting or controversial material where learners may feel uncomfortable about expressing a point of view
- include teamwork to assist with hearing, discussing and analysing other views
- be formative and not be linked to summative assessment. (Brookfield 2012)

There is one other important component of critical thinking which is: time. Critical thinking is a process, and as such, requires considerable amount of time to be well undertaken. It also requires time for learners to develop the skills necessary for performing critical thinking, and this should be factored into each course.



Figure II.1: Steps of Critical Thinking (Thyer, E. 2013)

II.2.C. The Significance of Teaching Critical Thinking

Many teachers emphasize on the fact that learners should have an effective critical thinking set of skills. Thus, the promotion of critical thinking into the FLT classrooms is of high significance for several reasons.

First, several educational experts have stressed on the importance of instilling higher order thinking skills in one's education as it helps learners to analyse the situation, which makes learners learn the tasks better before emerging with the solution in both academic and non-academic contexts (Chance, 1986; Tama, 1989; Ennis, 1992; Elder & Paul, 2001,). Moreover, if language learners can take charge of their own thinking, they can monitor and evaluate their own ways of learning more successfully.

Second, critical thinking expands the learning experience of the learners and makes the language more meaningful for them.

Thirdly, critical thinking has a high degree of correlation with the learners' achievements (Rafi, n.d.). Different studies have confirmed the role of critical thinking in improving ESL writing ability (Rafi, n.d.); language proficiency (Liaw, 2007); and oral communication ability (Kusaka & Robertson, n.d.). Learners may become proficient language users if they have motivation, and if they are taught the ways of displaying critical thinking in foreign language usage, which signifies that the learners must have reflection on their production of ideas, and they may critically support those ideas with logical details (Rafi, n.d.). Language development and thinking are closely related and the teaching of higher-order thinking skills should be an integral part of an L2 curriculum.

Teachers have emphasized the importance of developing higher-order thinking skills in foreign language classrooms (Chamot, 1995; Tarvin & Al-Arishi, 1991) and empirical evidence supports the effectiveness of teaching critical thinking skills along with the foreign language (Chapple & Curtis, 2000; Davidson, 1994, 1995).

In fact, language learners who have developed critical thinking skills are capable of doing activities, which other learners may not be capable of doing. Implied in the study by Mahyuddin et al (2004) is that language learners with critical thinking ability are capable of:

- thinking critically and creatively so as to achieve the goals of the curriculum
- Making decisions and solving problems
- Using their thinking skills

- Understanding language or its contents
- Treating thinking skills as lifelong learning
- Being well-balanced intellectually, physically, emotionally and spiritually.

However, in spite of the fact that there is little argument among theorists and educators about the importance of thinking skills in language development, in typical school settings, language learning and thinking skills are often treated as independent processes (Miraman & Tishman, 1988; Suhor, 1984). In other words, as Pica (2000) states, in the tradition of English language teaching methodology, the integration of language and thinking skills has been peripheral. It is argued that even communicative language teaching, which emphasizes the use of language as a communication tool, does not really help learners to become proficient in the target language (Kabilan, 2000). Pica (2000) suggests that for learners to be proficient in a language, they need to be able to think creatively and critically when using the target language. So, it is implied that even communicative approaches to language teaching do not develop critical thinking among learners.

Due to the advantages mentioned so far for enhancing critical thinking in language learners and also little practice in this regards in FLT settings, as Brown (2004) asserts. In an ideal academic language program, the objectives of the curriculum should go beyond linguistic factors to develop critical thinking among learners. In fact, the effectiveness of language teaching will depend upon what is being taught, in addition to language, which learners can consider as a purposeful and relevant extension of their horizons (Widdowson, 1990).

Language teachers are among practitioners who can greatly influence the type of learning by language learners. Therefore, one of their responsibilities is to help learners develop critical thinking abilities. Maybe even more than L1 teachers, L2 teachers have reasons to introduce their learners to aspects of critical thinking (Davidson, 1998). As Lipman (2003) stated, teachers are responsible for promoting critical thinking in learners other than helping them to go from one educational level to the next. The responsibility of foreign language teachers is to help their learners acquire critical thinking skills while learning the language. Finally, as Mahyuddin et al (2004) assert there is plenty of room for improvement in incorporating the thinking skills into our curricula.

II.2.D. Implementing group work in the teaching and learning experience

II.2.E. Principles of Group Work //assessment//

Group work is a very powerful learning approach, which can be hugely beneficial to learners when used effectively. It can be used separately, or as part of assessment of learners within a study group. i.e. assessment of individual contribution to a group's work where each individual is assessed, or assessment of a group's presentation where the presentation as a product of the group work is assessed as an assessment of the group as a whole.

These principles apply to all group activities whether they are assessed or not. They need to be considered in relation to the whole course design, including the required discipline-specific content and the appropriate learning, teaching, and assessment strategy for the course. Particular attention should be paid to the assessment variety across each level together with the vertical integration of the assessment programme across levels.

II.2.F. Preparation

It is vital that the purpose of working as a group and the expected outcomes of this task are made clear to learners involved regardless of the task carried out. The points below should be considered in this light:

- The rationale and linked learning outcomes should be clearly articulated to the learners before starting. Particular care should be given to any assessed group task(s).
- Working in groups involves a number of interpersonal skills which must be embedded in the curriculum and identified prior to, as well as facilitated during the assessed group work. These skills might include:
 - Emotional intelligence
 - Conflict resolution
 - Negotiation
 - Giving and receiving feedback.
- Learners should have the opportunity to practise their interpersonal skills prior to undertaking a group assessment such as taking part in non-assessed group activities or engaging in peer feedback.

II.2.G. Design

Group work should be designed with reference to the learning outcomes and should enable learners to demonstrate these successfully. This may be through realising the benefits of working together or through the produced outputs of the group.

- The design of group work should equip learners with knowledge and understanding of how individual roles contribute to groups at a level appropriate for the specified group work.
- The group task(s) must be both inclusive and accessible by design, taking into account learners needs and learning contracts where appropriate.
- The opportunity for self and/or peer assessment/feedback should be built into the curriculum delivery and/or assessment strategy as necessary.
- Individual and/or group reflection on the group process should be included where appropriate.
- Design should include an audit process for monitoring and support (e.g. monitoring of written records/ audio recordings of group meetings on a group wiki).

II.2.H. Group Size

The dynamics of group size is an important component of group work. A small group is often considered to consist of three or more people (Beebe & Masterson, 2003). Groups of two are called dyads and are not encouraged for group work because there is not a sufficient number of learners to generate creativity and diversity of ideas (Csernica et al., 2002). In general, it is suggested that groups of four or five members tend to work best (Davis, 1993). However, Csernica et al. (2002) suggests that three or four members are more appropriate. Larger groups decrease each members opportunity to participate and often results in some members not actively contributing to the group.

In situations where there is a shorter amount of time available to complete a group task, such as an in class collaborative learning exercise, it is suggested that smaller groups are more appropriate. The shorter amount of time available, the smaller the group should be (Cooper, 1990; Johnson, Johnson & Smith, 1991).

Group work can also be especially beneficial for large classes. Wright and Lawson (2005) found that group work helped learners feel that the class was smaller and

encouraged them to come to class more often. Learners felt more invested in the course and in the class material, which in its turn, promoted active learning in a large class environment.

II.2.I. Support and monitoring

For group work to be a successful learning experience it needs to be supported and this, by itself, requires the existence of a system in place to monitor the progress of groups. Monitoring ideally should be:

- Integrated into the way a group operates and be learner-led.
- Ground rules should be pre-determined and clearly communicated.
- Support must be ongoing throughout the period of the group work with the opportunity for tutor feedback and intervention where necessary.
- Progress must be monitored at set intervals and remedial action taken by the tutor in case of difficulties based on information from the audit process. For example, chasing or dealing with an absent group member in a timely fashion.

II.2.J. Organizing group work

The social experience that group works carries along requires the distribution of roles which are symbolic but necessary for the performance of group works in an organized fashion. Among these roles, the following:

1. **Manager/Leader:** to keep the team on task.
2. **Reader:** to read aloud the question being answered by the team.
3. **Encourager:** to make sure everyone participates.
4. **Checker:** to make sure everyone understands.
5. **Writer/Recorder:** to record results and to make sure everyone agrees.
6. **Artist:** to prepare the presentation if needed.
7. **Presenter:** if needed to explain the team's answer to the rest of the class.
8. **Roving Reporter:** when the team gets stuck, allowed to roam the room looking for ideas and brings them back.
9. **Time Keeper:** encourages group to stay on task; announces when time is halfway through and when time is nearly up.
10. **Errand Monitor:** collects supplies or request help from teacher when necessary.

II.2.K. Group Work Assessment

Group work can provide learners with a valuable learning experience whether or not it is associated with formal assessment. However, group work raises the same issues as any other assessment, together with a few extras. The decision about whether and how to assess should be based on the purpose of the activity and the significance it plays in the learners' learning outcomes or in the achievement of key objectives. Where group work contributes significantly to the achievement of program /course objectives, its assessment should be included in the overall assessment plan. The following are guidelines to take into consideration while tackling group work tasks / activities:

- Assessed Group work must be carefully planned and the assessment strategy clearly presented to learners.
- Assessment of Group work should be conducted in such a way that it supplies evidence of individual contribution and contributions in line with QAA precepts on assessment of learners.
- Assessment should take into account the process as well as the product of the group work.
- In the assessment of a group work activity no assessment task should consist solely of a flat group mark i.e. a common mark awarded to all participants based on the product of a group activity. Any common mark should be combined with another assessment activity, such as an individual reflective piece, which allows an individual learner's contribution to be recognized and leads to an individual task mark for each participant / learner. The marks and weighting allocated to the group product and the individual contribution should be clearly specified in the assessment criteria.
- Marking criteria, including tutor and self or peer assessment criteria where appropriate, should be clearly articulated and provided to the group prior to the start of the group task(s). These criteria should indicate what parts of the assessment are marked as a group, and where individual effort is recognized as well as their respective weighting.

II.2.L. Advantages of group work

There are five main advantages for working in a group:

1. **Groups have more information than a single individual;** Groups have a greater well of resources to tap and more information available because of the variety of backgrounds and experiences carried by each member.
2. **Groups stimulate creativity:** In regard to problem solving, the old adage can be applied that “two heads are better than one.”
3. **Learners remember group discussions better:** Group learning fosters learning and comprehension. Learners working in small groups have a tendency to learn more of what is taught and retain it longer than when the same material is presented in other instructional formats (Barkley, Cross & Major, 2005; Davis, 1993).
4. **Decisions that learners help make yield greater satisfaction:** Research suggests that learners who are engaged in group problem solving are more committed to the solution and are better satisfied with their participation in the group than those who were not engaged.
5. **Learners gain a better understanding of themselves:** Group work allows learners to gain a more accurate picture of how others see them. The feedback that they receive may help them better evaluate their interpersonal behaviour.

II.2.M. Disadvantages:

Although working in groups has its advantages, there are also times when problems arise. Beebe and Masterson (2003) list four disadvantages:

1. **There may be pressure from the group to conform to the majority opinion:** Most people do not like conflict and attempt to avoid it when possible. By readily acquiescing to the majority opinion, the individual may agree to a bad solution just to avoid conflict. This applies the same for learners.
2. **An individual learner may dominate the discussion:** This leads to learners not gaining satisfaction from the group because they feel too alienated in the decision making process.
3. **Some members may rely too heavily on others to do the work:** This is one of the most salient problems that face groups. Some members do not pitch in and help and do not adequately contribute to the group (Freeman & Greenacre, 2011). One

solution to this problem is to make every group member aware of the goals and objectives of the group and assign specific tasks or responsibilities to each member.

4. **It takes more time to work in a group than to work alone:** It takes longer to accomplish tasks when working with others. However, the time spent taking and analysing problems usually results in better solutions.

II.3. **Conclusion**

To sum up, the processing of critical thinking because of its semantic features is a complex task. The characteristics mentioned throughout this chapter should be taken into account in order to provide learners with effective didactic tools, which will help them achieve a better comprehension. This need arises precisely the reflection on the use of collaborative work as a tool allowing learners to access a better performing of critical thinking. Therefore, we propose to speak about this collaborative work, its forms, its mechanism and its scope for autonomy of learning and improving learners' critical thinking.

III. Chapter II: Description of the case study's context

III.1. Introduction

Since the independence 1962, the Algerian educational system has witnessed many changes according to the most “said efficient teaching methods in the world”. Despite all the efforts spent in Algeria in order to pursue the mission of enhancing educational level in general, not least that of EFL has witnessed a dilemma in the 1980s onwards. Because of the spoon-feeding nature of the adopted teaching methods as well as being bent to time and not to the learners’ achievements, EFL learning has reached an alarming situation in which it was divorced from its communicative nature. It became, thus, treated by the learners as a mere subject to be restricted to classroom use and never go beyond its boundaries. The change was not restricted to the academic years distribution but in the teaching approaches as well.

Description of Third Year Secondary Schools Syllabus in Algeria (Foreign Languages)

III.2. Description of the case study’s context

As described in the General Introduction of this thesis, this research explores the notion of critical thinking and group work in the context of 3rd year secondary school learners. Both learners and teachers are subject to the official versus issued by the authorities – the Ministry of National Education – which comprises of the syllabus, and a specific teaching style. The following will cover a general as well as specific to English description of the syllabus for the 3rd year secondary, as well as a brief history of teaching styles applied in Algeria.

III.2.A. Description of the Syllabus of English

English has been de facto the dominant foreign language in the curricula of many educational systems all over the world. On the view of such paramount role, much importance has been given to the teaching of EFL in the Algerian schools, and thus English has become a compulsory subject-matter in the curriculum in all schools all over the country.

With the new educational reforms that Algeria has mandated, during the last few years, the English language was perceived on a larger scale on the view of the reform targets. Thus, syllabus designers view that:

“The study of English must imperatively be conceived with the objective of helping our society to get harmoniously integrated in modernity. This means a fully complete participation in a rising linguistic community of people who use English in all types of transaction. This participation must be based on sharing and exchanging ideas as well as experiences in the fields of science, culture and civilization. This will make it possible to know oneself and the other”

(Program of English as a Second Foreign Language, 2003:2)

In this sense, a good command of English is urgently recommended to gear the needs of Algerian community as well as to fully participate in different fields, such as science, culture, civilization...etc.

III.2.B. EFL at the Secondary School

Secondary Education lasts three years and constitutes a formal preparation for the Baccalaureate examination (BAC) , held at the end of the third year, which is at once a statistical index of the educational achievements in secondary schools and a key to higher education.

As far as EFL is concerned, it is part of the curriculum regardless of the learner’s stream (literary, scientific or technological) and represents an additional facet to the general learning and instruction of pupils. (Ourghi, 2002:24).

At the level of 3rd year secondary, the teacher introduces learners to a systematic study of discourse patterns and language functions that give learners the opportunity to “process content relating to their lives and backgrounds and to develop both fluency and accuracy”. (Teacher’s Guide, 2007:59). These pupils are also exposed to different types and styles of discourse and are supposed to have an acceptable command of the main functions to have the capacity to express themselves.

By the end of Secondary Education, learners are thus, expected to acquire a functional knowledge of English that may enable them to gain an ability to express themselves orally and in writing in a fluent, accurate, and meaningful English, inside and outside the classroom setting. They are then, meant to “be prepared to interact with various language situations they will encounter in real life” (Teacher’s Guide, 2007:60). It is further assumed that such task should be accumulated by the teacher, using whatever materials; he/she may find at his/her disposal and by exposing his/her learners to the target language, inside his /her classroom.

The 3rd year secondary, foreign languages class learners, who are the case study of this thesis, study English in accordance with a number of subject-matters. These latter differ in coefficient and time load. The following table illustrates the diversity in time load and coefficient among the English subject and the other studied subject-matters for 3rd year foreign languages class:

Subject-matter	Time Load per week	Coefficient
Arabic Language & Literature	<i>5 hours</i>	5
French	<i>4 hours</i>	5
English	<i>4 hours</i>	5
<i>Spanish</i>	<i>5 hours</i>	4
History & Geography	<i>3 hours</i>	2
Mathematics	<i>2 hours</i>	2
Islamic Sciences	<i>2 hours</i>	2
Sports	<i>2 hours</i>	1
<i>Philosophy ,</i>	<i>3 hours</i>	2
English	<i>4 hours</i>	5
Total	<i>34 hours</i>	28

Table III.1: Time load and coefficients for 3rd year foreign languages subject-matters (Curriculum of English for 3rd year secondary, 2007:130)

The previous table shows the position that English sustains in the curriculum of 3rd year secondary, foreign languages class. Compared to other literary stream's subject-matters, English is considered as a fundamental subject-matter and has a high coefficient that complies with the importance of English given to it by the authorities, as well as being an international language and the language of science and technology in the modern world. While studying English, learners of 3rd year secondary, foreign languages class are supposed to deal with a number of themes that differ from one stream to another. The list below enumerates the suggested themes (also called units) for the 3rd year secondary, foreign languages class:

- **Theme / Unit 01:** Ancient Civilization
- **Theme/ Unit 02:** Ethics in Business
- **Theme / Unit 03:** Educations in the World

➤ **Theme / Unit 04: Feelings and Emotions**

These themes / units constitute the six main themes recommended in the syllabus for the entirety of the 3rd year secondary. Each of the four themes suggested for the foreign languages class specifically, is supposed to be covered in twenty-two (22) teaching hours / sessions (since the session can take 45 minutes during Ramadan according to the guidelines by the Ministry of National Education issued each year). Each session gives learners the chance to employ the taught functions and practice the discourse patterns in such a way as “to instil in learners ease and confidence in their communicative use of English” (New Prospects, Teacher’s Guide, 2007: 70).

III.2.C. Teaching methods (styles) in Algeria

Since its independence in 1962, Algeria has aimed at the establishment of an educational system tailored to the needs of the population. Based on this principle, the authorities, i.e. the Ministry of National Education, later on recognized the growing role and importance of English as a tool of communication with the world’s community. Consequently, the history of ELT in Algeria has become a tale of ambition and accomplishment. Along this path, English language education has witnessed the implementation of different methods and approaches as the science of English Language Learning/ Teaching has developed. Elaborating from the most ancient classical methods such as the Grammar-Translation Method and the Direct Method to the modern methods such as the Structural Approach and the Communicative Approach, and finally to the most recent method: Competency-Based Approach. The following are a description of these methods.

III.2.C.1. The Grammar-Translation Method

The Grammar-Translation Method originated in Prussia in the mid-19th century. It was the offspring of the German scholastic philosophy. Therefore, it was first known in America as the Prussian method. It dominated the field of foreign language learning for more than a century.

Earlier in the twentieth century this method was used for the purpose of helping learners read and appreciate foreign language literature, and grow intellectually. It is still acknowledged as the most popular method and is still widely used in many parts of the world. In this very specific context, Miliani notes: “Practice shows that traditional methods continue to prevail despite the progress achieved in methodology. It seems, therefore, that

the methodological routine continue more than ever as it is subject to a superficial coating of new labels whose philosophies are only rarely internalized by teachers.”.(Miliani, 1998, p. 14).

Brown attempted to explain why the Grammar Translation Method is still “alive and kicking” in many countries worldwide by stating three main reasons: First, this method requires few specialized skills on the part of the learner. Second, Grammar rules and translation tests are easy to construct and can be objectively scored. And third, many standardized tests of foreign languages still do not attempt to test communicative abilities, so learners have little motivation to go beyond grammar analogies, translations and other written exercises. These reasons, among a few others, still perpetuate the use and consolidate, so to speak, the deep anchoring of the oldest classical teaching method in the field of foreign language learning despite the many criticisms that have been made explicitly to it. This confirms the adage that “old habits die hard”, so do the classical methods, not least the Grammar Translation Method. (Brown, 1994)

III.2.C.2. The Direct Method:

It is a common fact that the Direct Method came as direct reaction against the inherent shortcomings of the Grammar Translation Method. As its name suggests, this new method emphasized language learning by direct contact with the foreign language in meaningful situations. The following is a list of the main principles underlying a direct method-oriented language teaching:

- The use of targeted language’s everyday vocabulary and structure.
- Grammar is taught through meaningful situations.
- Introduction of many new items in the same lesson so that the language sounds natural and normal conversation is encouraged.
- Oral teaching of grammar and vocabulary.
- Provide concrete meanings through object lessons and abstract ones through the association of ideas.
- Grammar illustrated through visual presentation.
- Extensive listening and imitation until forms become established.
- Most of the work done in class.

(Adapted from Mackey, 1965, pp. 149-50)

In summary, then, the direct method was introduced to actually remedy the teaching situation at two fundamental levels: substitution of explicit formal grammar teaching by language contact, and translation activities by language use. The rationale underpinning the direct method is, however, the establishment of a direct association between words and phrases and their meaning through demonstration, dramatization, pointing, etc. very similar to the case with the process of L1 acquisition. As Lado posits “The direct method assumed that learning a foreign language is the same as learning the mother tongue, that is, that exposing the learner directly to the foreign language impresses it perfectly upon his mind”. (Lado, 1964, p. 5).

In a practical fashion, the direct method provides an exciting and interesting framework of learning a language through activity. Unfortunately, as Rivers noted “Since learners are required at all times to make a direct association between phrases and situations, it is the highly intelligent learner with well-developed powers of induction who profits most from this method, which can be discouraging and bewildering for the less talented” (Rivers, 1981, p. 34). To get around with the problems mentioned above, some teachers strongly recommended the reintroduction of some grammatical explanations of a strictly functional kind given in the mother tongue. Along similar lines, where it is difficult to establish the meaning of words and phrases by demonstration and dramatization, teachers could give very brief explanations in the mother-tongue.

In Algeria the direct method was first implemented in Middle School education in the early 1970s with the introduction of Broughton’s ELT textbook *Success with English Course book*. The course book is divided into thirty-six teaching units. These are larger than teaching lessons, and not necessarily are one week’s work. How long a teacher takes over a unit depends on local conditions: length and frequency of lessons, age and abilities of learners, etc. Ideal conditions might give six teaching hours in a week. As stated in the *Teachers’ Handbook* (1972, p. 25) “*Success with English* is a flexible course and the classroom teacher must know best at what pace he can use it”. Culture-wise, though many EFL teachers and inspectors still report that Broughton’s Textbook was appropriate for the proficiency level of our former 3rd and 4th year Middle School pupils, its content were culturally inappropriate. The use of statements like: Jillian is Martin’s girlfriend and Martin is Jillian’s boyfriend have no place in the Algerian social context. Sentences such these types are still regarded as taboo topics. Allusion to dating and alcohol are seen as incompatible with Islamic values.

III.2.C.3. Structural Approach:

The structural approach to language teaching, also known as the grammar approach, represents, so to speak, a compromise language teaching model which attempts to strike the balance between the formal teaching of grammar with a heavy use of a metalanguage and translation activities and the non-allowed use of the learners' mother tongue. The structural approach is actually a by-product of structuralism. In a structural syllabus, the grammatical structures form the core of the whole teaching/learning process. A structural-based language course is based on units that are defined in grammatical terms. The different parts of the language are taught separately and step-by-step so that learning establishes itself as a gradual accumulation of the parts until the whole structure of the language is fully mastered. The following list provides the assumptions underlying a structural syllabus:

- Language is a system consisting of a set of grammatical rules.
- Learning a language is learning the grammatical rules.
- Application of grammatical rules to practical language use.
- The linguistic input is selected and graded according to grammatical simplicity or complexity.
- Mastery of the structure before moving to the next.

In summary, then, the grammar of the target language occupies a central place and holds the lion's share in the teaching/testing process.

The structural syllabus generally revolves around two main components: a list of language structures, i.e. the grammar to be taught, and a list of words, i.e. the lexicon to be taught. This overemphasis on linguistic competence has a detrimental effect on the development of communicative skills. It does not address the immediate communication needs of the learner. However, testing is relatively simple as teachers have to deal with discrete point knowledge and skills.

In Algeria the structural approach was first implemented in ELT Secondary education in the early 1970s with the introduction of L.G. Alexander's popular ELT textbooks Practice and Progress and Developing Skills. Actually, Practice and Progress is the second textbook of Alexander's Series New Concept English. It was first published in 1967 with a later revised edition in 1993. The textbook was intended for the pre-intermediate level which corresponded then to 1st year and 2nd year learners. It is divided

into four units. Each of which is preceded by an entry test. Each unit consists of twenty-four passages which become longer and more complex as the course progresses (Alexander, 1967, p. xiv). Though the passages are multi-purposes, they are made-up texts which evolve around specific grammar points, called, Key Structures.

As for *Developing Skills*, it is the third textbook of Alexander's *New Concept English*. It was first published in 1967. The textbook was intended for the intermediate level, which corresponded then to 3rd year learners. It is divided into three units, the first two of which are preceded by an entry test. Each unit consists of twenty passages, which become longer and more complex as the course progresses (Alexander, 1967, pp. ix-x). Though the passages are multi-purposes, they are made-up texts which evolve around specific grammar points, called, Key Structures, much more similar to the first book, as stated previously.

III.2.C.4. Communicative Approach

When communicative language teaching (CLT) was first developed in the 1970s, it was widely seen as the definitive response to the shortcomings of previous approaches and the communication needs of a globalized world. CLT is a language teaching approach based on the linguistic theory of communicative competence. Developing communicative competence in learners is the goal of CLT. The approach emphasizes humanism, which focuses on learner's needs and individual affective factors; advocates several language-learning principles, as opposed to an articulated learning theory; and draws from several language teaching methods. Therefore, CLT is an approach rather than a method of English Language Teaching (ELT).

CLT's main aim is to increase the number of learners who are able to effectively communicate in English. Thus, many national language education policies in various countries, among them Algeria, have moved towards CLT since the 1990s (Littlewood, 2007). Traditionally, the teaching of EFL has focused on knowledge about the structure and grammar of English language instead of the actual use of English for communication. Traditional approaches such as the grammar translation method and audio-lingual methods, commonly used for English teaching, were accepted because few learners' had opportunities to use English for real communication. However, these traditional approaches are seen as no longer serving the needs of learners.

In spite of its significance in some studies, teachers expressed difficulties in including cultural aspects into their classes because of lack of experience in an English-speaking country (Yu, 2001; Liao, 2004). Learners' resistance and shyness besides low-English proficiency also deter teachers from using CLT (Li, 1998; Liao, 2000; Yu, 2001; Liao, 2004; Chang, 2011). Moreover, CLT focused on the receptive skills and neglecting the productive skills; i.e. reading and writing, paved the way to the emerge of the competency based approach and its implementation.

III.2.C.5. Competency-Based Approach

Till 2002, English language teaching witnessed a great movement of reform in Algeria. The National Commission for Educational Reform (also known as PARE) in collaboration with UNICEF introduced the competency-based curriculums in Algerian secondary schools. The Competency Based Approach (CBA) involved fundamental pedagogical changes in the curriculum and instructional approaches. It implied a shift from content-based curriculums that promoted theoretical understanding of concepts to a process-based curriculum that promoted collaborative co-construction of knowledge. The adoption of these new perspectives in Algeria emerged as a dominant force in effort to understand and improve language learning.

CBA draws on socio-constructivist theories. One of the common threads of the socio-constructivism is the idea that development of understanding requires learners to actively engage in collaborative knowledge construction process. Jenkins (2000) argued that "the development of understanding requires active engagement on the part of the learner" (Jenkins, 2000 p.601). From this viewpoint, the ideas and thoughts identified within the mind of learners are the products of social as well as individual cognitive processes of learning. Knowledge hence exists as a social eternity, not just as an individual possession. Socio-constructivism has brought out how knowledge construction and appropriation are as much a function of the immediate context of social interaction as well as individual cognitive processes (Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch; 1991; Leontiev; Lantolf, 2000, Karppinen 2005; Ravenscroft, Wegerif, and Hartley 2007).

This perspective of social interaction and collaborative knowledge construction serves as a strong foundation for the Algerian competency-based teaching methodology. It refers to an educational movement that advocates defining educational goals in terms of precise measurable description of the knowledge and social and individual mental skills

required for effective performance of a real world task or activity, that learners should possess at the end of a course of study (Guskey, 2005; Weddel, 2006; Thinktwice, 2007, Griffith, 2014). Competency based education addresses what the learners are expected to do rather than what they are expected to learn about (Weddel, 2006). In other words, CBA is a productive education that focuses on the engagement of learners in the collaborative process of knowledge construction for the development of competencies that lead to autonomous learning. It shifts the orientation of the content, largely but only and exclusively away from the rote memorization of factual knowledge construction. (Woods, 2008; World Bank, 2011; Wangeleja, 2010).

The Algerian Ministry of National Education made lot of efforts to make it operational and facilitate its implementation in Algerian schools. There have been serious financial and human commitments to retrain and support teachers, head teachers, inspectors, and other educational professionals to ensure that they have the necessary competences and confidence to implement and effectively handle the pedagogical approach. Since then, a growing number of seminars were organized throughout the country, under the supervision of general inspectors of English language who constantly send memos to the respective administration of the school for each teacher under their supervision. The aim of these seminars is to help teachers get acquainted with the new books and teaching methods and to sufficiently equip them with the knowledge needed to competently and competitively solve the development challenges, which face the nation.

III.3. Group Work:

To understand group work, one must first understand groups themselves, their basic nature and the processes that characterize them (Forsyth, 2011). Forsyth stated that a group is ‘...two or more individuals - in this context: learners - who are connected to one another by social relationships - in this context: classroom -’ (Forsyth, 2006, pp. 2-3).

Group work is an umbrella term. It is a collection of people who are emotionally, intellectually, and aesthetically engaged in solving problems, creating products, and making meaning i.e. an assemblage in which each person learns autonomously and through the ways of learning of others. Group work is a learner - centred approach to teaching that emphasizes collaboration, cooperation, and teamwork. Rance-Roney (2010) describes group work as a classroom practice where “learners work in teams to construct knowledge and accomplish tasks through collaborative interaction.” Sometimes teachers use groups to

work on short activities in an informal way. However, a more formal structure to group work can provide many benefits for the learners as well. According to Brown, (1989, p.77), it is a generic term covering a multiplicity of techniques in which two or more learners are assigned a task that involves collaboration and self initiated language.

Many teachers from disciplines use group work to improve their learners' learning. Whether the goal is to increase learners' understanding of content, to construct particular transferable skills, or some combination of the two, teachers often turn to small group work to capitalize on the benefits of peer-to-peer instruction. This type of group work is formally termed cooperative learning, and is defined as the instructional use of small groups to promote learners working together to maximize their own and each other's' learning.(Johnson, et al., 2008).

As stated previously, group work in an umbrella that includes the following terms: cooperative learning, collective learning, peer learning, reciprocal learning, or team learning. Furthermore, active learning approaches often involve learners working in groups. The advantage of this pedagogical choice is that learners can apply concepts, solve problems, and, in general, engage cognitively with course content with the support of peers. Additionally, if designed thoughtfully, group work can help learners develop metacognition, i.e. the ability to think about as well as monitor one's own thinking and learning.

Closely related to the idea of critical thinking and a key element in learning, group work involves complex cognitive and affective elements. Cooperative learning is characterized by positive interdependence, where learners perceive the idea that better performance by individuals produces better performance by the entire group (Johnson, et al., 2014). Cooperative learning can be formal or informal, but often involves specific intervention by the teacher to maximize learner's interaction and learning. It is infinitely adaptable; learners can be working in small or large classes as well, and across disciplines, and can be one of the most effective teaching approaches available to instructors.

According to Gomleksiz (2007), working collaboratively requires learners putting themselves together to reach special objectives. In a classroom context, a group work is composed of a reduced or large number of learners reflecting on a common issue or assignment. Schulman (1999) views the concept of group work as a "mutual system" which considers how people may construct lives for their own. The method of forming a group sometimes may affect learning. The notion of group in the context of the

Competency Based Approach can be viewed as learners working together as a team. The majority of teachers organize learners to work in group just because they want to get learners involved actively in the classroom. A group work may also offer instructors the possibility of feeling free, more relaxed and less demanding for certain activities. Furthermore, a group work allows learners to become more responsible.

III.4. Conclusion

Algeria has gone through a series of actions in its policy of education: from a purely French colonial regime during the colonial period, to a monolingual country after the adoption of the Arabization policy, to an open country in the twenty-first century. When the winds of change blew over the Algerian educational system, it had to adopt a modernization policy to keep pace with time. However, no chain being stronger than its weakest link, the teaching of English, in Algeria, had itself to respond to other profound changes in society. As a matter of fact, and in order to lead the country to a successful reform, it is my contention that a separation between politics and policy is essential. It is undeniable that Algeria has accomplished steps forward in its educational policy about languages, but the hardest work is yet to come. Teaching English in our schools be it first, second or simply foreign language needs deeper planning at all levels of education. Our students and teachers alike are addressing a clarion call, not only for policy makers, but for the whole nation, too.

IV. Chapter III: Results Interpretation and Recommendations

IV.1. Introduction

After having presented in the preceding chapter the theoretical aspect of this research and the conceptual tools appropriate to the required analysis, the second chapter will define the experimental aspect by bringing detail on the objective of this research, its course and on the targeted audience.

The primary goal of this research is to study the impact of collaborative work on the development of learners' critical thinking through rewriting an expository text. In other words, within the framework of requirements for the validity of this research, an experiment has been conducted to understand the cognitive behaviour of learners in a situation of comprehension of a text. The experiment consists of asking learners a series of questions in a collective way, through which, learners should mobilize their different representations, and reinvesting their ability to rewrite, as well as render a text to make it more comprehensible and accessible on the one hand and to facilitate the understanding of its content on the other hand.

To execute such, the experiment was conducted with 3rd year Foreign Languages class at SAIDI Khalfallah Secondary school. The proposed instruction for the experimental test is to write a short summary of the text, within their words. The participants have been divided into two groups (experimental vs. control) to perform the proposed task individually vs. collectively (collaborative work).

It is notable to mention that the experimental public benefited from a theoretical presentation on how to write a summary, its forms, and the modalities of its design.

Within the requirements for the validity of this research also, questionnaires has been distributed among teachers as well as learners. More details will be provided furthermore on this chapter.

Finally, within the requirements of the validity of this research still, an interview has been conducted with an experimented teacher; Mr. Derouich who has more than 20 years of experience in the field of secondary education, and currently holds the rank of instructor teacher.

IV.2. Theoretical framework

Since the field of intervention of the present research is cognition and the co-construction of knowledge, it is thus primarily inspired by the cognitivist approach

considering comprehension as a very elaborate meaning-making activity, probably the one of the most complex among those that learners exercise. And secondly, the socio-constructivist approach, which assumes that a learners learn better through interactions, collaborations, and socio-cognitive conflicts.

The research method that we will adopt is the international experimental method "I.M.R.a.D" (based on inductive reasoning and a qualitative rather than quantitative analysis).

IV.3. Research tools

While conducting this research, a variety of research tools has been employed in order to gather the necessary data for the progress of this work. These tools include nonetheless than the experiment, in which the researcher has performed attentive observations and monitoring of learners' behaviour and reaction to carefully selected materials submitted to learners during the learning sessions. In addition, the research also includes questionnaires distributed to the case study, i.e. both teachers and learners, and conducting short interviews with experienced teachers additional but valuable insight regarding the work at hand.

The following are details regarding each tool following by an analysis of the relationships between the research's aspects and findings obtained.

IV.3.A. The experiment

The experiment was conducted by the teacher of English subject-matter Mrs. DINE Amira, in the 3rd year, foreign languages class, at SAIDI Khalfallah Secondary School, SIDI Ahmed, SAIDA. The following are details of the aspect of the experiment conducted.

IV.3.A.1. Materials employed

As part of the experiment, an expository text has been given to learners in order to observe and collect their feedback and reactions regarding the text given. The type of text chosen, i.e. expository, has been selected for its characteristics, and for reasons related to the training and needs of the intended audience, in this case, learners of the 3rd year foreign languages class.

In its nature, the purpose of the explanatory text is to make a reader – in this case the learner – understand something, to increase his knowledge, to transmit to him an

interpretation of facts, data, and thus knowledge supposedly unknown to him in order to elicit a reaction to the message given (Adam & Mitterand, 2005, Dufour, 1995).

The explanatory text also enriches the linguistic culture of the learner, by addressing scientific topics in the context of the development of knowledge in the learner.

The text used as part of this research is an expository text that describes the risks of counterfeit medicines that they impose on health, the medical business, and the international cooperation to get rid of it. The text is taken from Algerian Baccalaureate exam course of June 2009. On the other hand, this text, in terms of layout, is an average long text containing 16 lines spread over four paragraphs. (See annex No 03).

IV.3.A.2. The experiment's population

The sample targeted by this research is composed of 20 learners (including 5 boys and 15 girls). Their age varies between 18 and 21 years enrolled in 3rd year foreign languages class at SAIDI Khalfallah Secondary School.

However, it is important to emphasize that the choice of this audience was based on common observations that show that most of Algerian learners, in particular 3rd year secondary, foreign languages class learners, have difficulties in thinking critically owing to the fact that they lack the necessary skills. These learners, even if they develop a good level in English language, they always keep facing several problems cornering critical thinking. Consequently, it is important to emphasize that the choice of this audience was mainly because they would be best able to provide the information required by this research since English is considered of the highest importance for 3rd year foreign languages class learners comparing to classes from the other streams.

It is worth mentioning that these difficulties constitute a vast field of investigation for didactic research as well as for us in particular.

The learners participated in this experiment were divided into two groups: an experimental group and a control group. The experimental group were divided into four subgroups containing four learners each, who will perform the task. On the other hand, the control group included four learners, who are treated individually. Each learner, was required to rewrite the text within his/her own words. The distribution of the groups can be summarized in the following schema: (Figure IV.1)

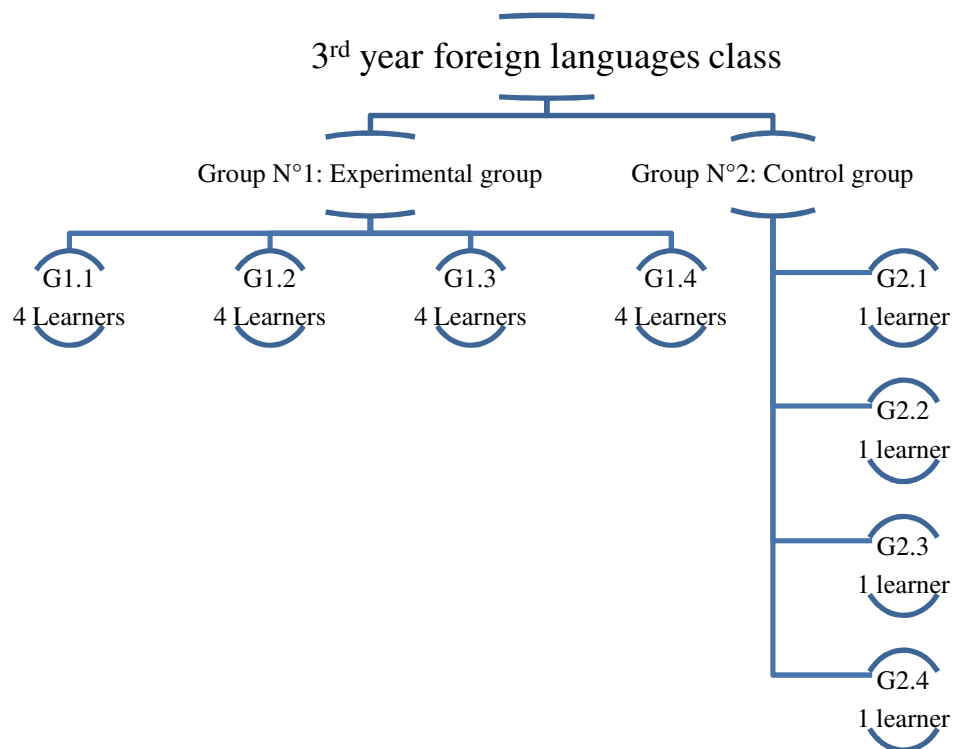


Figure IV.1: Groups of the experiment's population

IV.3.A.3. Variables of the experiment

The experiment consisted of two types of variables: independent, and dependent. The independent variables include individual work vs. group work, gender, age, and the level of proficiency of English language. The dependent variables consist of the rewriting of the initial text as a summary.

IV.3.A.4. Procedure and instructions of the experiment

The experiment carries tasks that are time consuming and can't be done within the amount of time proposed by one session i.e. one hour. Therefore, the experiment was conducted into two sessions, in addition to a debriefing session held after.

IV.3.A.4.a Session one

The first session was spread out over 1 hour and 30 minutes. The aim of the session was to reactivate prerequisites of learners on writing a summary as well as a presentation of its roles.

This session was introduced by a question-answer game aimed at awakening interest. The teacher introduced them to a course on the concept of summarizing and writing a text's summary using their own words. The text subject to summary was an explanatory text entitled "Counterfeit Medicines" (see annex n°3). The objective was to

schematize the text and rewriting it as a summary. The teacher began by giving them a definition of summarizing, its use, and its different structures. Then, some examples of well-constructed summaries. The aims of the teacher were to show learners how to represent a text by means of a summary. The session ended with an application that lasted for 30 minutes followed by the teacher's writing of a summary built from the participation of the majority of learners, which lasted for 15 minutes.

The session included instructions given by the teacher as well that were directed to learners. The aim of the teacher was to provide guidance as the task requires. During this session, the following instructions were given:

1. Read the original text carefully to understand its overall meaning and all the information it contains, sometimes, you need to "read between the lines" to pick up the hidden information.
2. Concentrate and underline and highlight all the important ideas of this text.
3. On a sheet, write down all the underlined ideas and the concept and surrounds each one with a circle. Each circle must contain a single idea or concept.
4. **The idea and the concepts are connected by arrows:** the arrows can be unidirectional or bidirectional.
5. An idea can be connected to one or more ideas.
6. From the text, put a link word on the arrow that connects each two ideas.
7. The linking words are usually verbs. Concentrate on verbs to choose the right words of connection.
8. **Review your map:** readjust the links and the layout of the concepts. Your card answers a question. You can add or remove links or concepts that are not necessary to answer your question.
9. When you finish developing your card, add numbers (1-2-3- 4- 5) on the arrows to show the order of the ideas and concepts as they appear in the text.
10. Did you understand correctly? Do you have any questions?
11. Rewrite the text within your own words
12. Go! You have 30 minutes, each working alone.
13. Read your draft to make sure you haven't lost the overall point of the original information.

IV.3.A.4.b Session two

The second session was spread over 1 hour and 15 minutes as well. The aim of the session was to propose a test as part of the experiment, which involves learners being in groups and working on the summary required.

The teacher began with a brief reminder of the previous session (writing a summary) for 10 minutes. Then the teacher randomly divided the experimental group, i.e. group n°1 containing twenty learners, into four subgroups containing 4 learners each. The control group, i.e. group n°2 was divided into four single individuals. The teacher then proceeded to explaining for learners the instructions and the task to be performed.

It is important to note that the experiment was conducted at the same time and under the same conditions for both groups.

The session included instructions given by the teacher. The aim of the teacher was to provide clarification for the task. During this session, the following instructions were addressed to learners:

“Today you are going to participate in a research experiment. For that, we count on your collaboration for its success. Do the best you can by respecting precisely the instructions, knowing that the proposed tasks will not be the subject of a rated evaluation, but they can help you better assimilate the notions of the “counterfeit medicines”. I send you our expressions of gratitude and appreciation for your valuable collaboration.”

IV.3.A.4.c Session three

In order to provide learners who participated in this experiment with the chance to self-assess and self-correct, a debriefing session was organized later by the teacher. Many learners attended as session two was new, fruitful, and interesting for them.

IV.3.B. Questionnaires:

As part of this research, pre-surveys were distributed at the beginning of the second week of April 2017. This enabled the identification of situations experienced by 3rd year foreign languages class learners, in particular, the situations in which group work is used as a language learning tool as well as the difficulties that teachers encountered with their learners during their teaching practices.

The questionnaires were distributed among both teachers and learners. The questionnaire for teachers was addressed to 10 members of the teaching staff at SAIDI Khalfallah Secondary School, and it was divided into three parts. The first part was concerned with the learning situations and the difficulties faced by learners during the theoretical sessions. The second relates to the type of support favoured by the teachers. The third part was about the effectiveness of collaborative / individual work as an alternative to their difficulties. (See Annex No. 01)

On the other hand, the questionnaire for learners was addressed to 30 learners who study in the 3rd year foreign languages class. The aim of the questionnaire was to ask learners about their level in English language as well as the difficulties encountered and their impact on their curriculum as well as on their way of working (collaborative or individual). (See Annex No. 02).

However, it is important to note that only 20 learners out of 30 submitted their answered questionnaire. The remaining 10 learners preferred not to answer despite its anonymous nature, which had to guarantee more freedom to answer the questions. The reason is believed to be due to their writing difficulties and level of English proficiency.

IV.4. Analysing obtained data

After collecting data through the various tools employed in this research, the next step is analysing and synthesising the data obtained in accordance with the goals and aims previously set in order to operationalize the main concepts referred to throughout this work.

To do such task, i.e. analysing obtained data; it is of importance to trace back the steps achieved so far in this research. First, the purpose of the research was presented. Second, the theoretical framework in which this research is inscribed was detailed. Third, methodological choices has been justified and explained. Fourth, the participating public, their distribution, their independent and dependent variables has been presented and detailed. Fifth, the procedures of the experiment were approached by providing details on the course of the sessions as well as on the proposed instructions. Finally, a brief overview on the method of analysis is to follow.

It is worth mentioning that the experimental approach, which has been chosen for the conduction of this research, has revealed several results, which will be described in the upcoming paragraphs of this chapter.

IV.4.A. Analysis method

The protocols of collecting data for the purposes of this research are based, in fact, on the answers to the questionnaires and the written summary provided by each learner.

The individually / collectively edited summaries were first subjected to a quantitative analysis where they were analysed according to the number of propositions proposed in each corpus.

Then, these texts proposed by the experimental groups were subjected to a qualitative analysis by first categorizing the propositions in three categories which are the relevant propositions, the irrelevant propositions and the inferred propositions. All of which, will be detailed furthermore in this chapter.

IV.4.B. Analyzing data obtained from the experiment

3.3. Corpus analysis

3.3.1. Categorization of answers:

In order to analyse the corpus, we propose to submit the texts produced by learners in the two groups; experimental group (EG) and the control group (CG). To a prepositional analysis in which we propose the following analysis model:

3.3.1.1. Categorization of the proposals:

Proposals are categorized as follows:

Proposition 1 (P1): this is a relevant proposition; it is a proposal that represents a concept and information belonging to the proposed authentic text

Proposition 2 (P2): this is an irrelevant proposition; it is a concept or incorrect information.

Proposition 3 (P3): it is an inferred proposition; it is a concept or correct information that does not belong to the original text yet is added by learners following an inferential activity (individual or collective)

IV.4.B.1. Presentation of the main hypotheses and predictions

Hypothesis 1: We assume that learners in the experimental group, who performed the tasks in collaboration, would produce texts with more relevant propositions (P1) than learners in the control group who produced their texts individually.

Prediction 1:

$$EG P1 > CG P1$$

Hypothesis 2: We assume that learners in the experimental group (EG) would produce texts with fewer irrelevant proposals (P2) than learners in the control group (CG).

Prediction 2:

$$GE P2 < CG P2$$

Hypothesis 3: We assume that learners in control group (CG) would be more productive than learners in the experimental group.

Prediction 3:

$$GE P3 > CG P3$$

3.3.3. Method of Analysis

To analyse the texts constructed by learners of the two groups, we calculated the averages of the types of the propositions produced by the set of each group, i.e. the experimental group (EG) and the control group (CG). The average obtained will be used to make a comparative study between the numbers of propositions in the texts conceived (individually and collectively) by the two groups.

3.3.4. Presentation of the results:

Based on the categorization of the answers and the analysis method mentioned above, the comparative study between the number of the proposals in the texts elaborated by the two groups, i.e. the experimental group (EG) and the control group (CG), revealed the following results:

3.3.4.1. Demonstrative charts of the results of the comparative study of relevant the propositions (P1):

Experimental groups	EG. 1	EG. 2	EG.3	EG.4	Avg. EG
Number of propositions	4	8	6	4	5.5
Control groups	CG. 1	CG. 2	CG. 3	CG. 4	Avg. CG
Number of propositions	4	2	2	6	3.5

The table above shows that the average of the relevant propositions (P1) in the experimental group (EG) is greater than the average of the relevant propositions (P1) in the control group (CG). This affirms our 1st hypothesis.

3.3.4.2. Demonstrative chart of the results of the comparative study of the irrelevant propositions (P2):

Experimental group	EG. 1	EG. 2	EG. 3	EG. 4	Avg. EG
Number of propositions	2	1	2	2	1.75
Control group	CG. 1	CG. 2	CG. 3	CG. 4	Avg. CG
Number of propositions	1	1	1	1	1

The table above shows that the average of the irrelevant propositions (P2) in the experimental group (EG) is slightly higher than the average of the irrelevant propositions (P2) in the control group (CG). This affirms our 2nd hypothesis.

3.3.4.3. Demonstrative chat of the results of the comparative study of inferred propositions (P3):

Experimental group	EG.1	EG.2	EG.3	EG.4	Avg. EG
Number of propositions	3	4	3	4	3.5
Control group	CG.1	CG.2	CG.3	CG.4	Avg. CG
Number of propositions	1	1	0	1	0.75

The table above shows that the average of the inferred propositions (P3) in the experimental group (EG) is greater than the average of the inferred propositions (P3) in the control group (CG). This invalidates our 3rd hypothesis.

To summarize, we can return the results of the previous study in the following graphical representation:

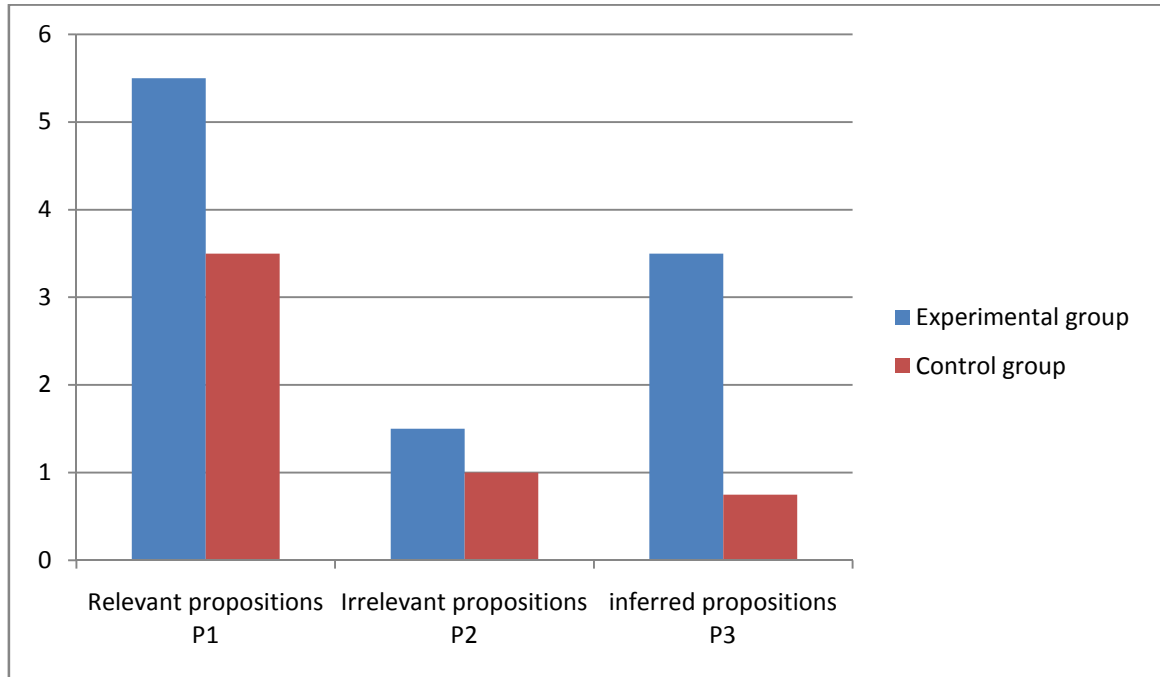


Figure IV.2: A graph summarizing the results of the comparative study of the average of the types of the propositions produced by the experimental group and the control group

IV.4.B.2. Summary

Following the comparative study of the averages of the different types of propositions and we arrived at the following results:

First, Collaborative work helps co-build knowledge; thus, critical thinking. As a matter of fact, we found it by the frequency of the relevant propositions (P1) in texts written and developed by the experimental groups compared to those made by the control groups. This validates our first.

Second, Collaborative work can be an incentive for error; this appears in irrelevant propositions frequency (P2) in the texts constructed collectively versus individually written texts. This validates our second and fifth hypothesis.

Third, Collaborative work promotes inferential activity in learners; we notice this through the dominant presence of prepositions (P3) in the experimental group (EG) texts compared to the control group (CG). This validates the third and the last hypothesis.

This concludes the presentation, interpretation and analysis of the results of our experimental research.

IV.4.C. Analyzing data obtained from questionnaires

The questionnaires were distributed to the teachers, and to the learners, which are to be considered two questionnaires distributed to different audiences with partial differences.

IV.4.C.1. Questionnaire distributed among teachers

The first questionnaire, i.e. the one distributed among teachers included 9 questions (as mentioned in annex n°1), which are as it follows:

Question 1: personal information (age)

Question 2: personal information (gender)

The first two questions provide the researcher with the ability to easy classify the sample of study's population based on categories of age and / or gender.

The following table shows age of teachers who answered the questionnaire:

Age	24	26	27	39	44
Number of teachers	2	2	4	1	1

Table IV.1: Age varieties of teachers

The following figure is a representation of the results shown in Table IV.1:

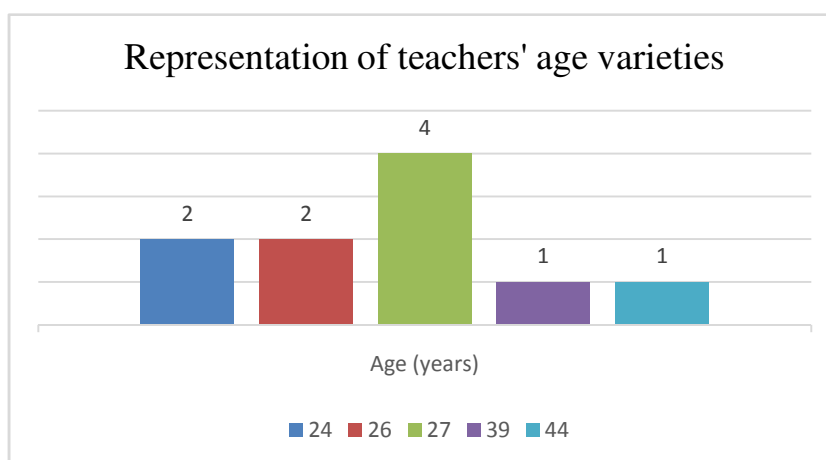


Figure IV.3: Representation of teachers' age varieties

As shown in the figure above (Figure IV.3), we note that the interviewed teachers' age varies between 24 and 44. We also note that teachers aged 27 represent the highest rate in the population of study of this research.

The following table shows the gender of teachers who participated in answering the questionnaire distributed among teachers:

Gender	Male	Female
Number of teachers	2	8

Table IV.2: Gender varieties of teachers

The following figure is a representation of the results shown on Table IV.2:

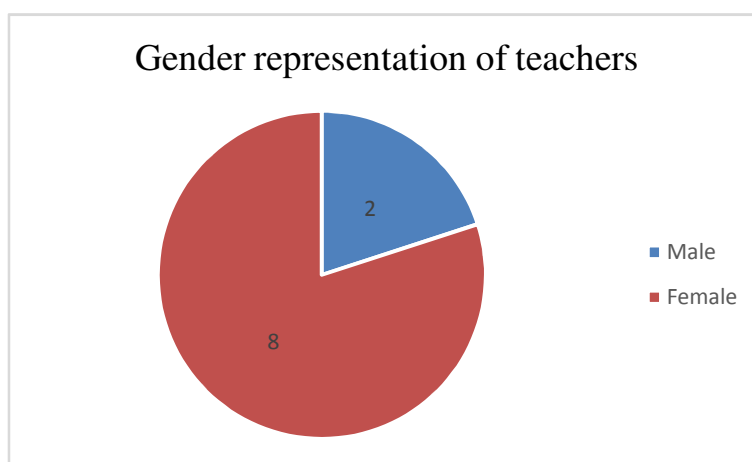


Figure IV.4: Gender representation of teachers

As shown on the figure above (Figure IV.4), we note that the majority of the population of study who are teachers are females, which demonstrates the increased role of women in the work force of the country.

Question 3: How do you qualify the general level of your learners in English?

In this multiple-choice question, the teacher must be able to judge and evaluate the level of his learners in English. To answer this question, the teacher must choose between these three levels: Deficiency, Intermediate, or Good. The following table shows the results obtained:

Answers	Deficiency	Intermediate	Good
Number of answers	04	06	00
Percentage	40%	60%	00%

Table IV.3: Learners' level according to their teachers

The following figure represents the results obtained:

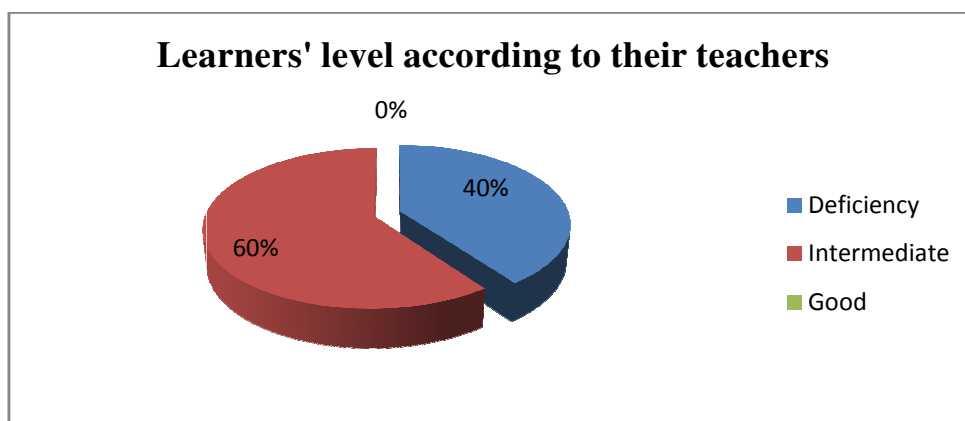


Figure IV.5: learner's level according to their teachers

As represented in the table and Figure IV.5, the majority of teachers surveyed (60%) claim that their learners have an insufficient level of language and less than average (40%) think their level is just intermediate. However, no teacher has judged the level of his learners to be good.

The answers to this question allowed us to conclude that the vast majority of learners testify a difficulty of comprehension. This conclusion is also supported by the results obtained from learners' questionnaires.

Question 4: Does it influence their academic performance?

This is a total questioning aiming to verify what the teachers questioned think about the influence of the level of the language on the academic performance. To answer this question, teachers were given the opportunity to respond with either YES or NO. The following table demonstrates the results obtained:

Answers	Yes	No
Number of answers	07	03
Percentage	70%	30%

Table IV.4: Influence of learner's level on the academic performance

The following figure represents the results obtained:

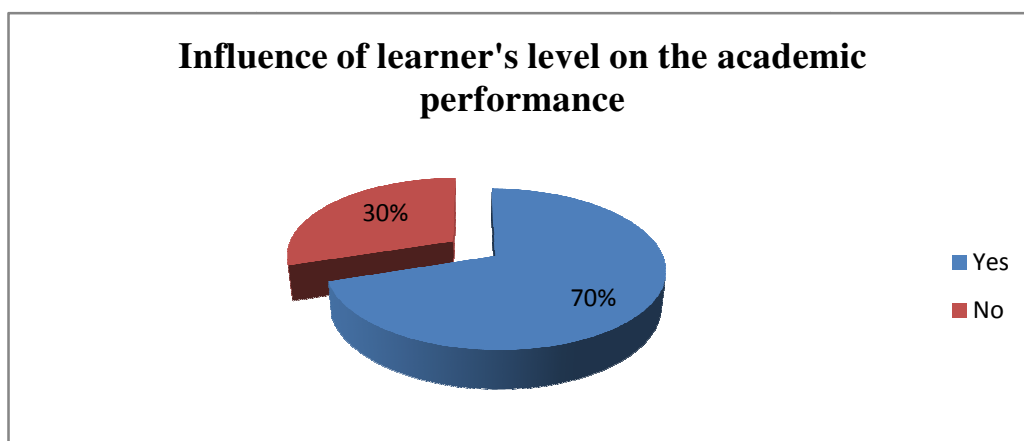


Figure IV.6: Influence of learner's level on the academic performance

From the data above, it is noted that the vast majority of teachers (70%) claim that the level of language has a significant impact on the learner' academic performance, while only 30% of teachers surveyed claim the opposite.

This allows us to conclude that language is, therefore, a criterion for success or failure of the learning process.

Question 5: Do you meet more difficulties in listening comprehension, reading comprehension, oral production, or written production?

In this question, teachers were given all possible suggestions to better understand the aim of the question as well as to accurately determine the difficulties encountered by learners. To answer this question, teachers had to choose between four Activities:

1. listening comprehension
2. reading comprehension
3. oral production
4. production of writing.

The following table show the results obtained:

Answers	Listening comprehension.	Reading comprehension	Oral production	Product ion of writing
Number of answers	01	06	01	02
Percentage	10%	60%	10%	20%

Table IV.5: Difficulties faced by teachers

The following figure (Figure IV.7) represents the results obtained:

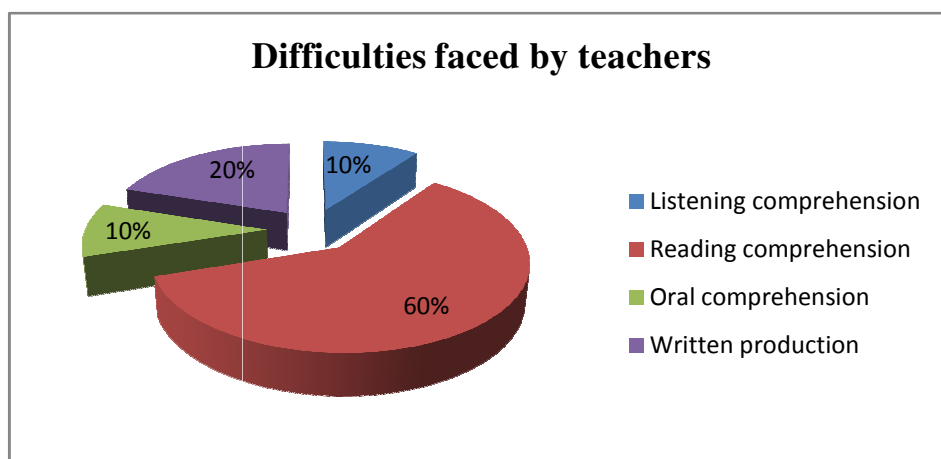


Figure IV.7: Difficulties faced by teachers

According to 60% of the teachers questioned, learners have difficulties in reading comprehension. 20% of teachers point out that their learners report difficulties in written production, and 10% of teachers answered that they face difficulties with oral comprehension. The remaining 10% claim the difficulties to be faced in oral production.

We deduce that the answers to this question are due to the frequency of written materials, which allows us to demonstrate the importance that teachers of 3rd year foreign languages give to the activities of writing.

Question 6: What support do you prefer more in your teaching practice?

This question was formulated with the aim to investigate what, according to the teacher, is the most appropriate type of medium to teach foreign language, i.e. English. To answer this question, the teachers questioned must choose between written texts, digital media, and or audio-visual aids. The teachers are asked then to justify their choice(s).

The following table demonstrates the results obtained:

Answers	Written texts	Digital media	Audio-visual aids
Number of answers	08	00	02
Percentage	80%	00%	20%

Table IV.6: Teaching supports

The following figure represents the results obtained:

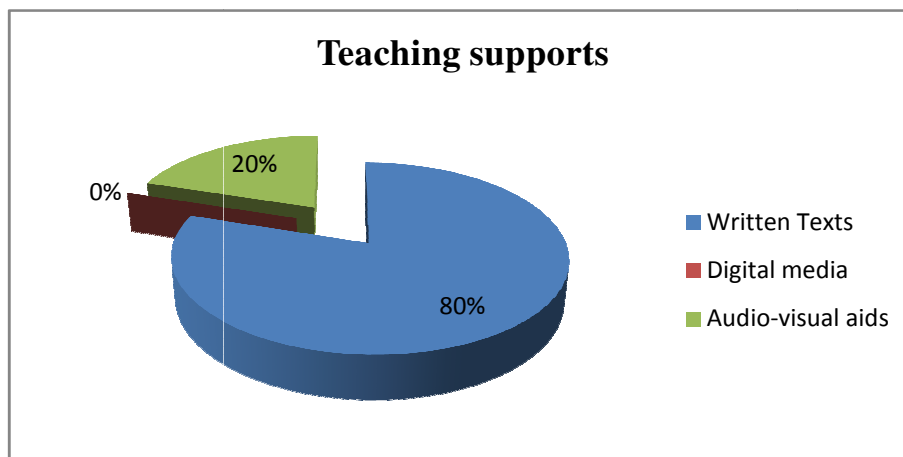


Figure IV.8: Teaching supports

As shown on Figure IV.8 above, 80% of teachers prefer the written supports. They argue that such supports are permanent documentation which remains under the disposition of learners. On the other hand, only 20% of teachers opted for audio-visual supports. They argue that they choose such support for their attractive and motivating aspects. However, against our expectations; no teacher has opted for digital media.

Furthermore, the frequency – noted from the results obtained and common observation – of use of specialized written texts over other supports does in fact justify, the methodological choice of reading comprehension as a target activity for this research.

Question 7: What technique do you often use at the time to better understand an expository text?

In this question, multiple options were given to the questioned, i.e. the teachers, to choose the technique they consider adequate to better understand an expository text. To answer this question, teacher had to choose between three suggested synthesis strategies often used by teachers:

1. The schematization in the form of a concept map.
2. The refund in the form of a summary table.
3. The rewriting as a summary text.

The following table shows the results obtained:

Answers	The schematization in the form of a concept map	The refund in the form of a summary table	The rewriting as a summary text
Number of the answers	02	01	7
Percentage	20%	10%	70%

Table IV.7: Teachers' choice of synthesis strategies

The following figure is a representation of the results obtained:

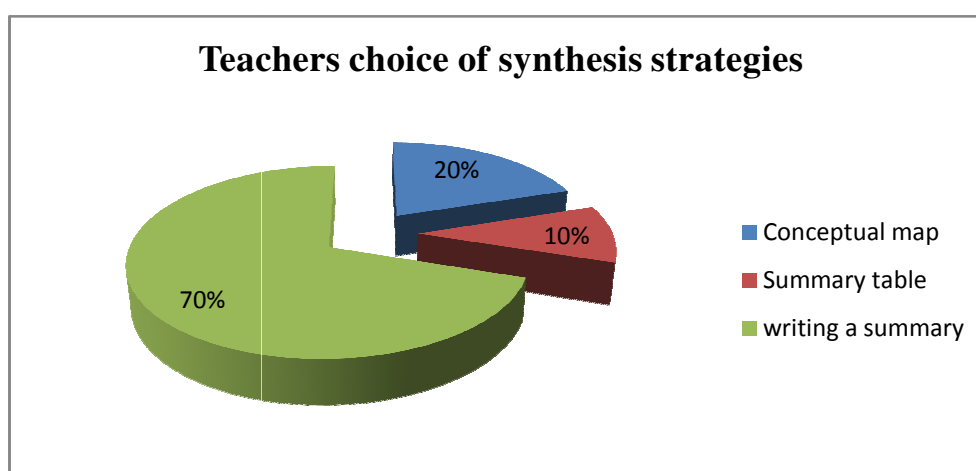


Table IV.8: Teachers' choice of synthesis strategies

Following these answers, we found that only 10% of teachers opt for summary tables to better understand the text taught, 10% use concept maps, while the vast majority of teachers (80%) prefer to rewrite their texts in the form of written summaries concept maps. This illustrates the frequency of their use by 3rd year foreign languages teachers thus validating our motivation.

Question 8: Do you think this technique is effective? Justify.

This question is a follow up to the previous question. After having validated the effectiveness of the technique chosen by answering YES, or NO, the questioned is asked to justify his choice.

The following table shows the results obtained:

Answers	In favor of The schematization in the form of a concept map	In favor of The refund in the form of a summary table	In favor of The rewriting as a summary text
Number of answers	02	01	07
Percentage	20%	10%	70%

These results are represented in the following figure:

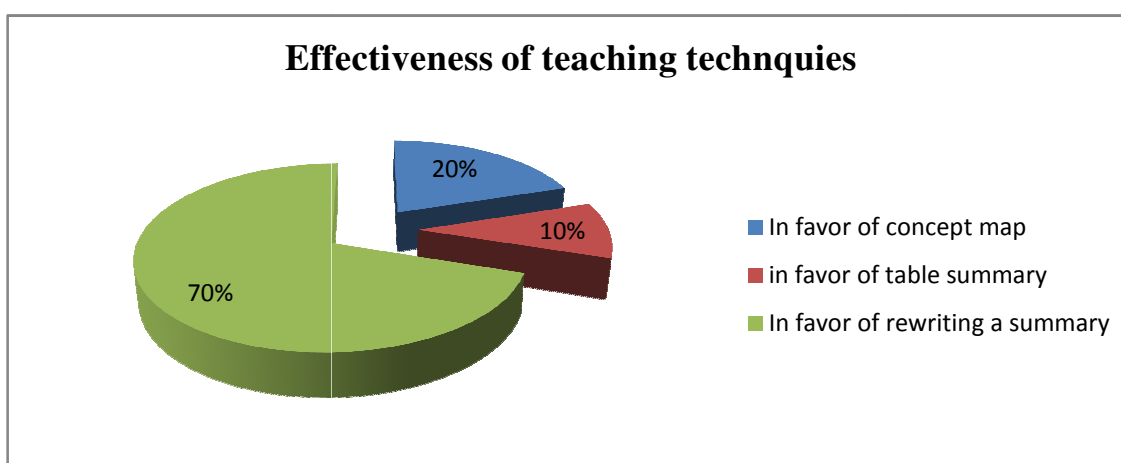


Figure IV.9: Effectiveness of teaching techniques

Teachers who favoured rewriting the text a summary (70%) say that it is accessible, easy to perform and improves the overall comprehension of the text and makes learners beyond the box. the teacher who opted for the summary tables justifies his choice in relation to the ease he offers to categorize the information. The last two teachers who favour the summary text state that this means allows the learner to improve his written technical production.

Question 9: Do you think that collaborative work (in groups) is an effective teaching and learning tool to improve learners' critical thinking and remedy their difficulties?

To sum up the questionnaire, teachers were asked about their point of view regarding collaborative work as a tool to enhance learners' critical thinking in terms of understanding texts, and as a remedy for comprehension difficulties. To answer this question, teachers should answer by YES or NO.

The following table shows the results obtained:

Answers	Yes	No
Number of answers	10	00
Percentage	100%	00%

The following figure is a representation of the results obtained:

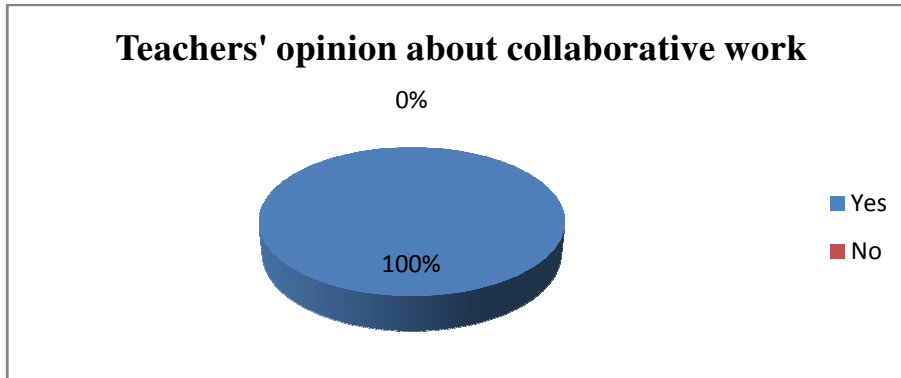


Figure IV.10: Teachers' opinion about collaborative work

This last question allowed us to conclude that the teachers questioned affirms by 100% in favor of collaborative work as a teaching and learning tool to improve learners' critical thinking.

IV.4.C.1.b Summary

In summary, we can say that the analysis of questionnaires addressed to teachers has allowed us to identify several elements that justify our choice of the participant as well as our methodological choices. We conclude that:

1. The majority of teachers surveyed (60%) consider that the level of English of their learners is just average and remains insufficient while a minority (40%) judge that their level remains insufficient.
2. The vast majority of teachers (70%) say that the level of language has a considerable impact on learners' academic performance and that language is a criterion for success or failure in the teaching-learning process.

3. According to 60% of the teachers questioned, learners have difficulties in reading comprehension.
4. 80% of the teachers favor the written support by justifying it with the fact that it is a permanent documentation which remains under the disposition of the learner. 20% opted for the audio-visual supports for their attractive and motivating aspect.
5. 80% of the teachers of 3rd year foreign languages prefer to rewrite their texts in the form of summary. They affirm the fact that they are accessible, easy to realize and improves the overall comprehension of the text.
6. The unanimity of the teachers interviewed is favorable to the collaborative work as a tool to enhance learners' critical thinking and help their understanding of expository texts and as a remedy for difficulties of understanding.

IV.4.C.2. Questionnaire distributed among learners

The second questionnaire, i.e. the one distributed among learners included 12 questions (as mentioned in annex n°2), which are as it follows:

Question 1: personal information (age)

Question 2: personal information (gender)

The first two questions provide the researcher with the ability to easy classify the sample of study's population based on categories of age and / or gender. The results obtained from Question 1 are represented in the following table:

Age	18	19	20	21
Number of learners	7	7	4	1

Table IV.9: Age varieties of learners

The results are represented in the following figure:

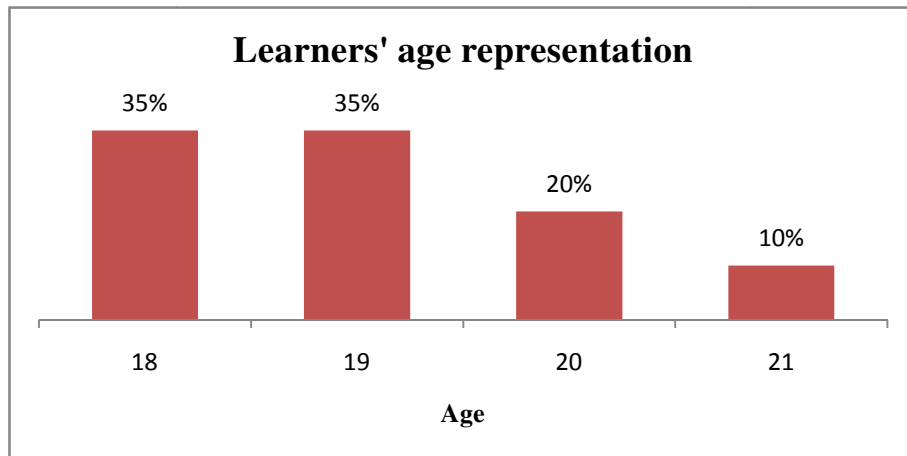


Figure IV.11: Age representation of learners

The analysis of results obtained regarding these this question allowed us to reveal that the age of the vast majority of learners are between 18 and 21 as shown on the figure above (Figure IV.11).

The results obtained from Question 2 about gender are shown in the following table:

Gender	Male	Female
Number of learners	5	15

Table IV.10: Gender varieties of learners

The results obtained are represented in the following figure:

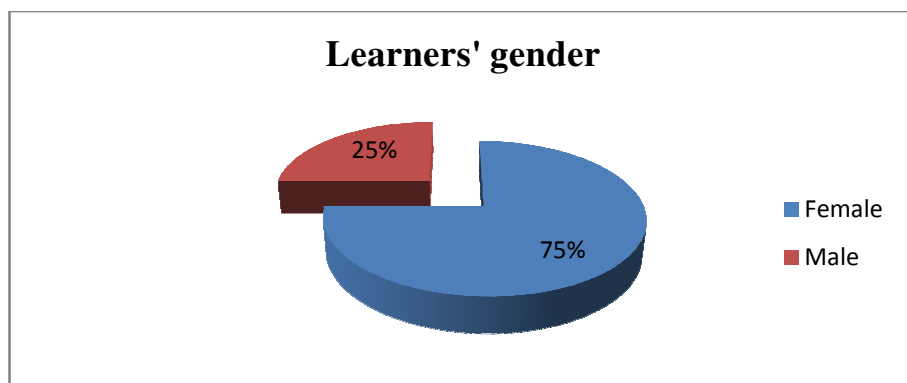


Figure IV.12: Gender of learners

As shown in the figure above (Figure IV.12)75% of learners surveyed are female while only 25% are male.

Question 3: What is your general level in English?

Question 3 is a multiple-choice question with the aim to determine the language levels of learners through their own self-judgement. To answer this question, learners were proposed three options to choose from: weak, intermediate, or good. The following table shows the results obtained:

Answers	Weak	Intermediate	Good
Number of answers	12	5	3
Percentage	60%	25%	15%

Table IV.11: Learners' level in English

The following figure is a representation of the results obtained:

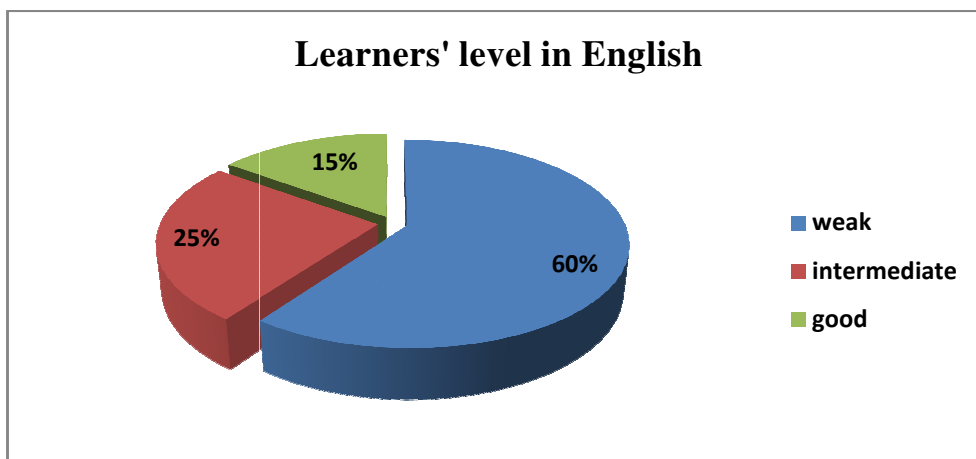


Figure IV.13: Learners' level in English

The responses obtained show that the vast majority of learners report a deficiency in language while the other minority has a level that varies between the intermediate and the good; which confirms our finding of departure.

Question 4: Does your teacher make you work in groups in class?

This question aimed at verifying whether learners work in groups in class. To answer this question, learners were provided with the opportunity to respond with either YES or NO. The following table represents the results obtained:

Answer	Yes	No
Number of answer	20	00
Percentage	100%	00%

Table IV.12: Working in groups

These results are represented in the following figure:

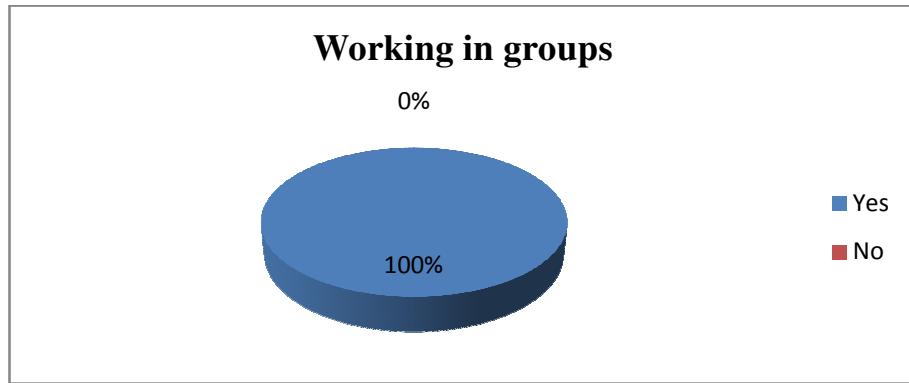


Figure IV.14: Working in groups

All learners (100%) agree upon the fact that their teachers employ group work as a teaching and learning method owing to significant impact of such method on their level of education. This allows us to deduce that group work is, therefore, a criterion of success or failure for learners' motivation, regardless of their level and their differences.

Question 5: Do you discuss with your peers when working in groups?

In this question, learners are asked whether they make discussions with their other classmates in various topics related to the subjects being taught. To answer this question, learners had to choose either answer YES or NO as an answer. The following table shows the results obtained:

Answers	Yes	No
Nr of answers	14	06
Percentage	70%	30%

Table IV.13: Group discussion

These results are represented in the following figure:

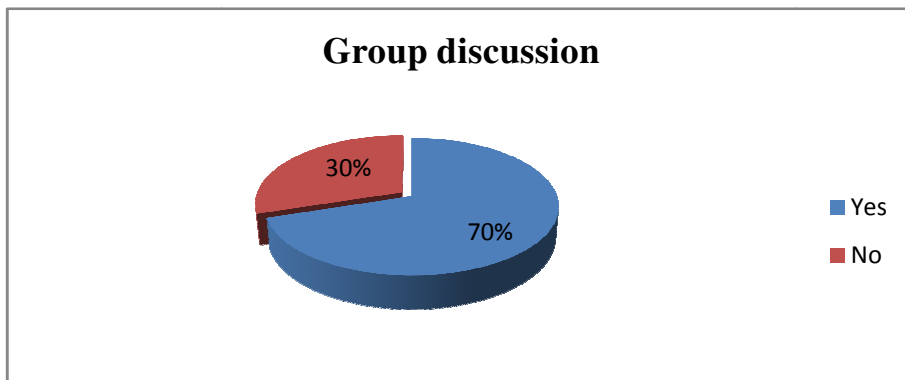


Figure IV.15: Group discussion

Representing a part as high as 70% of learners surveyed confirm that they discuss with their peers when working in groups. They claim that understanding through discussion and explanation and through giving and receiving feedback on performance of both them and their peers is much better than without. On the other hand the remaining 30% of learners claim they avoid discussion and they divide the tasks among group members so as to follow a plan and manage time.

Question 6: Do you discuss in English with your classmates during group work?

Question 5 in the questionnaire is about the use English in discussions during group work. To answer this question, learners had to choose between either YES or NO. the following table show the result obtained:

Answer	Yes	No
Number of answers	15	5
Percentage	75%	25%

Table IV.14: Use of English in group discussion

The results are represented in the following figure:

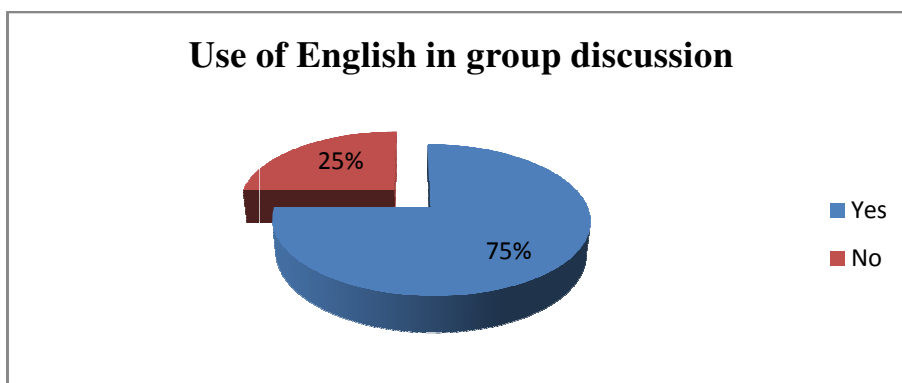


Figure IV.16: Use of English in group discussion

The vast majority of learners surveyed, i.e. 75% said that they use English in their discussion when they exchange ideas and views about the given topic, since it is a good opportunity to put the language they are learning into practice and to be developed. Yet, for other learners, i.e. the remaining 25%, they said that they do not use English in their discussion due to the deficiency they face in language. The answers to this question had led us to conclude that the vast majority of learners report more motivation in their English language learning process.

Question 7: Are you for or against group work? Justify.

This is a semi-open interrogation, in which the interviewed learners will be able to express their point of view about working collaboratively within groups first. Then they will be able to argue their point of view. To answer these questions learners had to choose first between two choices, i.e. either for or against, and then justify their choice in the blank space it followed. The following table shows the results obtained:

Answers	For	Against
Number of answers	18	2
Percentage	90%	10%

Table IV.15: Learners' opinion regarding group work

The results are represented in form of a pie chart in the following figure:

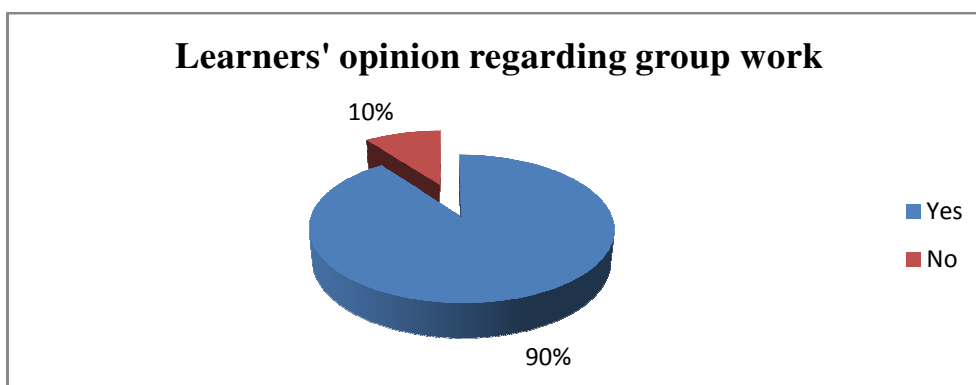


Figure IV.17: Learners' opinion regarding group work

As represented in the figure above (Figure IV.17), the vast majority of learners i.e.18 out of 20 learners interviewed, claim that they are for collaborative work. Out of this majority, 07 learners argued that working in groups is a means of getting help and facilitation of the task assigned since it would be shared. Out of this majority as well, 06learnersclaim that collaborative work saves time, while the remaining 05 learners prefer it for its motivating and entertaining nature.

On the other hand, 02 out of 20 learners claimed to be against collaborative work. They argued two points. First, they may get false information since the teacher is not a member of the group. And second, this way of working makes them lose time. The second point is justified since group work consumes more time and this particular point is regarded as a disadvantage for working in groups.

This question allowed us to conclude that the great majority of learners questioned are for the collaborative work for its motivating and facilitating nature, which in its turn, validates our motivation behind this research.

Question 8: Which is more effective?

This question have been formulated with the intent to obtain learners’ preferences regarding the discussion of topics, since discussion plays a major part in the exchange of information among group members and the development of critical thinking skills as well. The question was designed with two options as to facilitate answering the question for learners as well as to avoid off-topic answers. To answer this questions learners has to choose either, (1) discussing the topic with your peers in groups, or (2) introducing the topic by your teacher. The following table shows the results obtained:

Answers	Discussing topics with peers	The topic in being instructed by teacher.
Number of answers	13	07
Percentage	65%	35%

Table IV.16: Learners' choice of discussion

The results obtained are represented in the following figure:

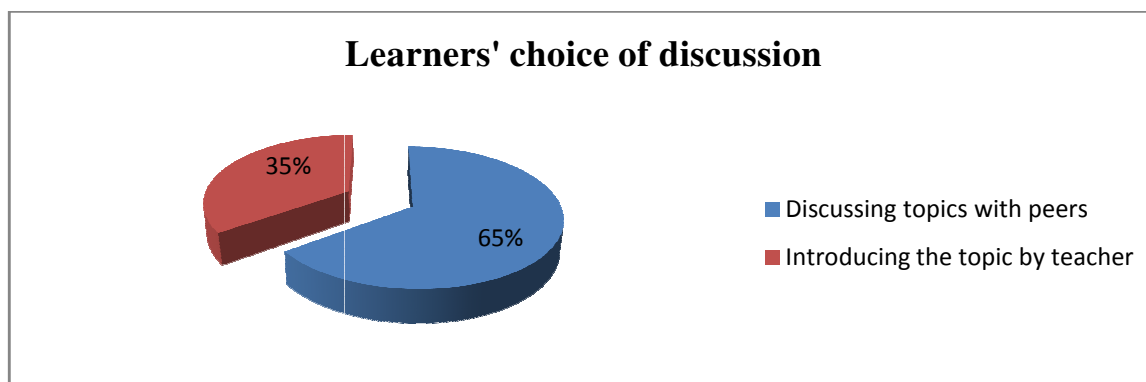


Figure IV.18: Learners' choice of discussion

As represented in the figure above (Figure IV.18), most of the questioned learners i.e. 65% of them, claimed that they prefer discussing topics with their classmates. The fact is peer discussion makes learners think harder and dig deeper of the information while still enjoying it at the same time. It also makes them combine their knowledge about a certain topic with an ability to analyse and criticize others. The remaining 35% of learners chose option two, i.e. they prefer being instructed by the teacher. Learners can choose to avoid group work if they sense the lack of coordination among group members. They can also

make such choice if group works can be regarded as distracting them while they prefer staying focused on the topic / task at hand, and asking for the help of the teacher when necessary.

Question 9: Does making discussions with your peers help you understand complex topics?

The aim of this question is to measure the effectiveness of group work and its impact on their learning pace, with complex topics as a standard of measure. To answer this question, learners can answer either by choosing YES, or by NO. The following table shows the results obtained:

Answers	Yes	No
Number of answers	17	3
Percentage	85%	15%

Table IV.17: Effectiveness of group work

The results are represented in the following figure:

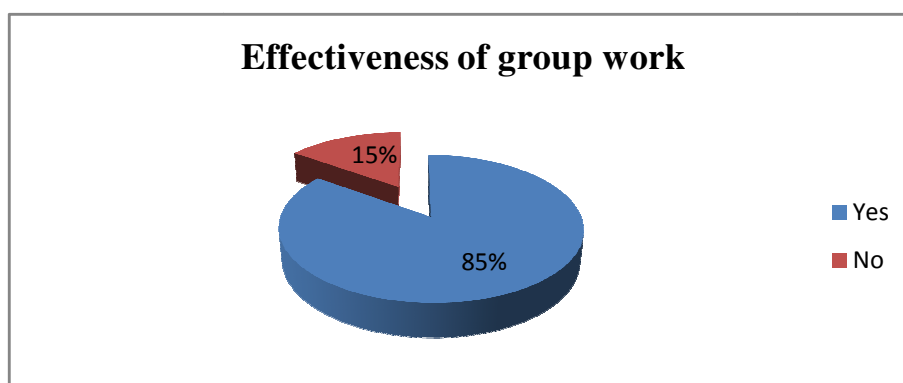


Figure IV.19: Effectiveness of group work

According to the vast majority of learners, i.e. 85%, working in groups helps them break complex tasks into parts and steps and tackle more complex problems than they could on their own. While the rest i.e. 15%, claim that they prefer working on their own when it comes to complex tasks. From here, we conclude that group work facilitates learning deficiencies.

Question 10: Does your teacher encourages you to work in groups, so as to make learning better and more motivating?

By asking this question, learners are telling about the role of their teacher and his / her involvement with group work. As stated earlier in this thesis, teachers' role in group work is guiding and encouraging learners to work more in groups rather than alone. The latter, i.e. group work is considered a crucial key in leading learners towards thinking critically. To answer this question, learners would either say YES or NO. The following table shows the results obtained:

Answers	Yes	No
Number of answers	20	00
Percentage	100	00

Table IV.18: Teacher's involvement in group work

These results are represented in the following figure:

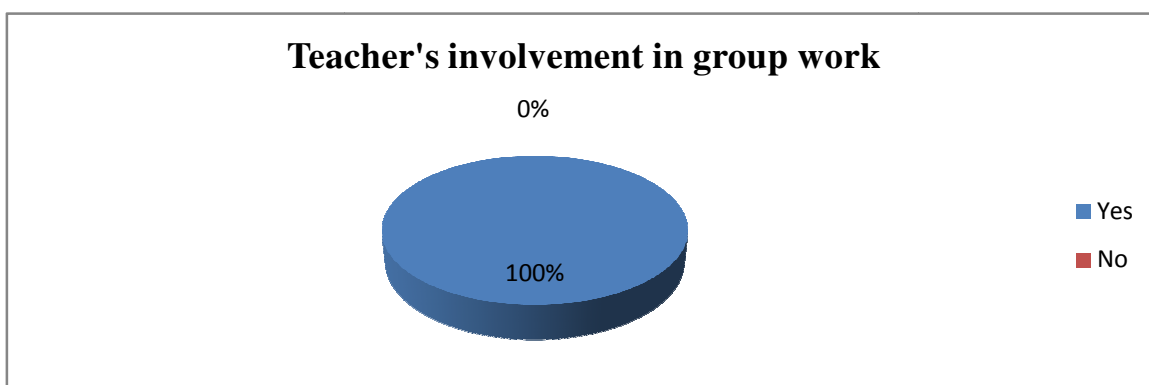


Figure IV.20: Teacher's involvement in group work

All the interviewed learners agreed on the fact that their teacher plays a vital role in their learning process. According to them, the teacher stimulates active learning by making them active agents in their leaning process so as to develop critical thinking. The answers to this question lead us to confirm our point of view that teachers' function in employing group work in their teaching process is important.

Question 11: Do you meet more difficulties in listening comprehension, reading comprehension, oral production, and or in written production.

In this question, learners were asked about the difficulties they face in the four primary skills / areas of language: listening, reading, speaking, and writing. The aim is to analyse with precision the difficulties faced by learners. To answer this question; learners

would choose one or more of the proposed options. The results obtained are shown in the following table:

Answers	Listening comprehension.	Reading comprehension.	Oral Production.	Written Production.	No answer.
Number of answers	01	07	03	03	06
Percentage	5%	35%	15%	15%	30%

Table IV.19: Learners' areas of difficulties

Graph representing the results of the ninth question:

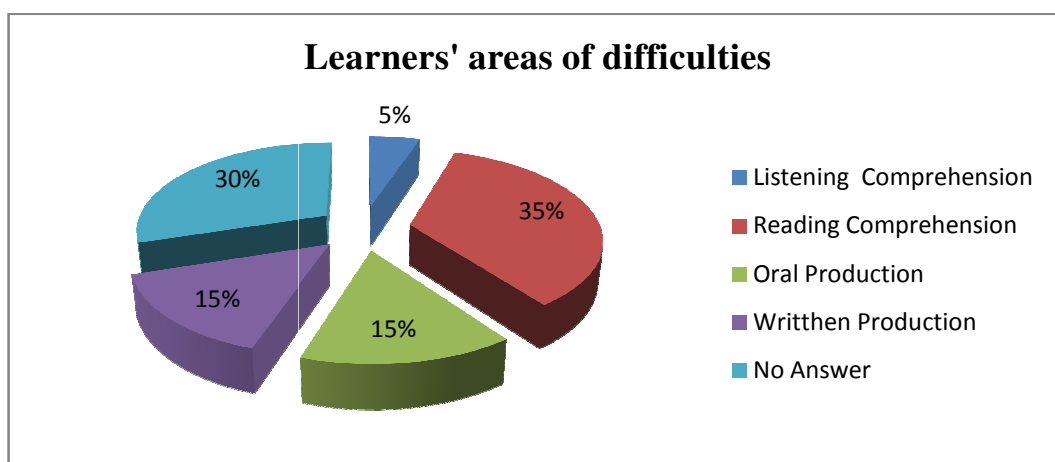


Figure IV.21: Learners' areas of difficulties

The results obtained from the answers of this question allowed us to point out that 35% of learners claimed to have difficulties in reading comprehension, 15% of learners claimed to face difficulties in understanding oral production. The same goes for written production. As far as listening production, only 5% of learners claimed to have faced difficulties in such area.

However, it is important to note that 30% of learners did not answer. We deduce that the cause is due to their level (good or excellent) of language. The answers to this question allowed us to demonstrate the importance learners place on writing activities; which supports our methodological choice.

Question 12: Do you have the enough competencies to perform critical thinking?

In order for learners to perform critical thinking, they need a set of skills. In this question, learners are asked if they feel possessing the necessary skills for critical thinking.

To answer this question, learners will choose either YES, or NO. The following table shows the obtained results:

Answers	Yes	No
Nr of the answers	05	15
Percentage	25%	75%

Table IV.20: Learners' competencies required for critical thinking

The results obtained are represented in the following figure:

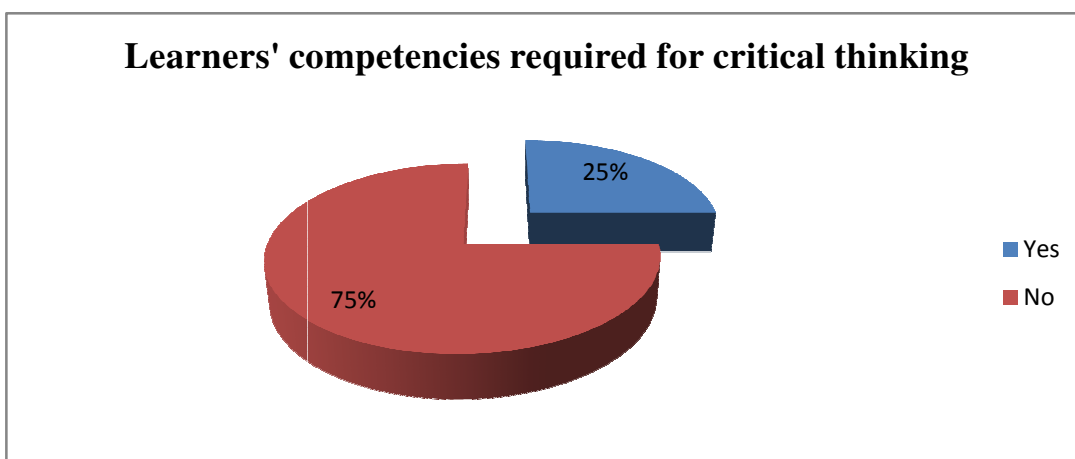


Figure IV.22: Learners' competencies required for critical thinking

Against our expectations, the majority of learners, i.e. 75%, opted for not having enough skills to perform critical thinking; thus, hinders learners' ability to develop critical thinking. While, a minority, i.e. 15% of learners feel that they have the necessary skills to perform critical thinking, which logically means they do in fact perform critical thinking.

The results obtained from learners' answers to this question justify the methodological choice of reading comprehension and summarizing as an activity of rewriting the proposed expository text.

IV.4.C.2.a Summary

To sum up, the study of the answers obtained from the questionnaires addressed to 3rd year foreign languages class learners allowed us to conclude the following points:

1. The vast majority of learners surveyed report a language deficiency while the remaining has a level that varies between intermediate and good.
2. The vast majority of learners say that group work has a significant impact on their level of education.

3. The vast majority of learners surveyed give more priority to the activities of writing (Understanding and Expression). This is due to the frequent use of expository texts as supports by teachers.
4. The vast majority of learners questioned claimed not having enough skills to perform critical thinking. The results vary between insufficient and average.
5. Most learners opted for collaborative work as an effective learning tool that promotes critical thinking.
6. Almost all of learners surveyed are for collaborative work because of its motivating nature.

The elements raised represent the motivating factors of our choice of the participating public.

IV.5. Implementation of Group Work

Group work can be an effective method to motivate learners, encourage active learning, and develop key critical-thinking, communication, and decision-making skills. But without careful planning and facilitation, group work can frustrate learning and instructors and feel like a waste of time. Use these suggestions to help implement group work successfully in your classroom.

IV.5.A. Preparing for group work

- **Think carefully about how learners will be physically arranged in groups.** Will it be easy for groups to form and for all students to be comfortable? Also think about how the layout of your classroom will impact volume. Will learners be able to hear one another clearly? How can you moderate the activity to control volume?
- **Insist on professional, civil conduct** between and among learners to respect people's differences and create an inclusive environment.
- **Talk to learners about their past experiences with group work** and allow them to establish some ground rules for successful collaboration. This discussion can be successfully done anonymously through the use of note cards.

IV.5.B. Designing the group activity

- **Identify the instructional objectives.** Determine what you want to achieve through the small group activity, both academically (e.g., knowledge of a topic) and socially (e.g., listening skills). The activity should relate closely to the course objectives and class content and must be designed to help learners learn, not simply to occupy their time. Roberson and Franchini (2014) emphasize that for group learning to be effective, learners need a clear sense that group work is "serving the stated learning goals and disciplinary thinking goals" of the course (280). When deciding whether or not to use group work for a specific task, consider these questions: What is the objective of the activity? How will that objective be furthered by asking learners to work in groups? Is the activity challenging or complex enough that it requires group work? Will the project require true collaboration? Is there any reason why the assignment should not be collaborative?
- **Make the task challenging.** Consider giving a relatively easy task early in the term to arouse learners' interest in group work and encourage their progress. In most cases collaborative exercises should be stimulating and challenging. By pooling their resources and dealing with differences of opinion that arise, groups of learners can develop a more sophisticated product than they could as individuals.
- **Assign group tasks that encourage involvement, interdependence, and a fair division of labour.** All group members should feel a sense of personal responsibility for the success of their teammates and realize that their individual success depends on the group's success. Johnson, Johnson, and Smith (2014) refer to this as positive interdependence and argue that this type of cooperative learning tends to result in learners promoting each other's success. Knowing that peers are relying on you is a powerful motivator for group work.
 - Allocate essential resources across the group so that group members are required to share information (e.g., the jigsaw method). Or, to come up with a consensus, randomly select one person to speak for the group, or assign different roles to group members so that they are all involved in the process (e.g., recorder, spokesperson, summarizer, checker, skeptic, organizer, observer, timekeeper, conflict resolver, liaison to other groups).
- Another strategy for promoting interdependence is specifying common rewards for the group, such as a group mark.

- **Decide on group size.** The size you choose will depend on the number of learners, the size of the classroom, the variety of voices needed within a group, and the task assigned. Groups of four-five tend to balance the needs for diversity, productivity, active participation, and cohesion. The less skilful the group members, the smaller the groups should be (Gross Davis, 1993).
- **Decide how you will divide learners into groups.**

Division based on proximity or learners' choice is quickest, especially for large and cramped classes, but this often means that students end up working together with friends or with the same people.

- To vary group composition and increase diversity within groups, randomly assign learners to groups by counting off and grouping them according to number. Another idea is to distribute candy (e.g., Starburst or hard, coloured candies) and group learners according to the flavour they choose.
- For some group tasks, the diversity within a group (e.g., gender, ethnicity, level of preparation) is especially important, and you might want to assign learners to groups yourself before class. Collect a data card from each student on the first day of class to glean important information about their backgrounds, knowledge, and interests. Alternately, ask learners to express a preference (e.g., list three students with whom they would most like to work or two topics they would most like to study), and keep their preferences in mind as you assign groups.
- **Allow sufficient time for group work.** Recognize that you won't be able to cover as much material as you could if you lectured for the whole class period. Cut back on the content you want to present in order to give groups time to work. Estimate the amount of time that subgroups need to complete the activity. Also plan for a plenary session in which groups' results can be presented or general issues and questions can be discussed.
- **Try to predict learners' answers.** You won't be able to expect the unexpected, but by having some idea about what students will come up with, you will be better prepared to answer their questions and tie together the group work during the plenary session.

- **Design collaborative work in multiple forms:** pairs, small groups, large groups, online synchronously, online asynchronously, etc. Some learners might be better at contributing after they have had time to digest material, while others might be better at thinking on the spot. Other learners will defer to others in large groups but actively contribute in pairs. All roles should be valued and included.

IV.5.C. Introducing the group activity

- **Share your rationale for using group work.** Learners must understand the benefits of collaborative learning. Don't assume that learners know what the pedagogical purpose is. Explicitly connect these activities to larger class themes and learning outcomes whenever possible.
- **Have learners form groups before you give them instructions.** If you try to give instructions first, learners may be too preoccupied with deciding on group membership to listen to you.
- **Facilitate some form of group cohesion.** Learners work best together if they know or trust each other, at least to some extent. Even for brief group activities, have students introduce themselves to their group members before attending to their task. For longer periods of group work, consider introducing an icebreaker or an activity designed specifically to build a sense of teamwork.
- **Explain the task clearly.** This means both telling learners exactly what they have to do and describing what the final product of their group work will look like. Explaining the big picture or final goal is important, especially when the group work will take place in steps (such as in snowballing or jigsaw). Prepare written or visual instructions (e.g., charts, sequential diagrams) for students. Remember to include time estimations for activities.
- **Set ground rules for group interaction.** Especially for extended periods of group work, establish how group members should interact with one another, including principles such as respect, active listening, and methods for decision making. Consider making a group contract.
- **Let learners ask questions.** Even if you believe your instructions are crystal clear, students may have legitimate questions about the activity. Give them time to ask questions before they get to work.

IV.5.D. Monitoring the group task

- **Monitor the groups but do not hover.** As learners do their work, circulate among the groups and answer any questions raised. Also listen for trends that are emerging from the discussions, so that you can refer to them during the subsequent plenary discussion. Avoid interfering with group functioning — allow time for learners to solve their own problems before getting involved. You might consider leaving the room for a short period of time. Your absence can increase learners’ willingness to share uncertainties and disagreements (Jaques, 2000).
- **Expect a lot from your learners.** Assume that they do know, and can do, a great deal (Brookfield & Preskill, 1999). Express your confidence in them as you circulate the room.
- **Be slow to share what you know.** If you come upon a group that is experiencing uncertainty or disagreement, avoid the natural tendency to give the answers or resolve the disagreement. If necessary, clarify your instructions, but let students struggle — within reason — to accomplish the task (Race, 2000).
- **Clarify your role as facilitator.** If learners criticize you for not contributing enough to their work, consider whether you have communicated clearly enough your role as facilitator.

IV.5.E. Ending the group task

- **Provide closure to the group activities.** Learners tend to want to see how their work in small groups was useful to them and/or contributed to the development of the topic. You can end with a plenary session in which learners do group reporting. Effective group reporting “can make the difference between learners feeling that they are just going through their paces and the sense that they are engaged in a powerful exchange of ideas” (Brookfield & Preskill, 1999, p. 107).
- *Oral reports:* Have each group give one idea and rotate through the groups until no new ideas arise. Or have each group give their most surprising or illuminating insights or their most challenging question. You can record ideas raised to validate their value
- *Written reports:* Have each group record their ideas and either present them yourself or have a group member do so. One variation on this is to have group

record their conclusions on a section of the blackboard or on flipchart paper that is then posted on the wall. Learners then informally circulate around the room and read each other's answers. Alternately, you can ask learners to move around the room in small groups, rotating from one set of comments to another and adding their own comments in response. Another variation on written reports is to have learners write brief comments on Post-it notes or index cards. Collect them, take a few minutes to process them or put them in sequence, and then summarize their contents.

- **Model how you want students to participate.** When responding to learners' answers, model the respect and sensitivity that you want the learners to display towards their classmates. Be ready to acknowledge and value opinions different from your own. Be willing to share your own stories, critique your work, and summarize what has been said.
- **Connect the ideas raised to course content and objectives.** Recognize that groups might not come up with the ideas you intended them to, so be willing to make your lecture plans flexible. Wherever possible, look for a connection between group conclusions and the course topic. However, be aware that misconceptions or inaccurate responses need to be clarified and corrected either by you or by other students.
- **Don't provide too much closure.** Although the plenary session should wrap up the group work, feel free to leave some questions unanswered for further research or for the next class period. This openness reflects the nature of knowledge.
- **Ask learners to reflect on the group work process.** They may do so either orally or in writing. This reflection helps them discover what they learned and how they functioned in the group. It also gives you a sense of their response to group work.

IV.6. Conclusion

This concludes the presentation, interpretation and analysis of the results of our experimental research.

We first introduced this last chapter by presenting and interpreting the results of questionnaires sent to teachers. Then, we presented and interpreted the results of the questionnaires addressed to the learners of the 3rd year foreign languages of secondary education. And finally we concluded our chapter by the presentation and interpretation of the results of the comparative study of averages of the different types of propositions contained in the texts constructed by the two groups. This paper evaluated the effectiveness

of implementing group work in language learning and teaching, in terms of learners' performance and learners' perceptions of this didactic form of learning during tutorial sessions. Educators are always striving to improve learners' performance and achievements in the field of language learning and teaching.

The issues of learning problems in language learning and teaching and the lack of metacognitive awareness of thinking and problem-solving skills still seem to persist, and despite differences amongst educators on an effective learning methodology, it can be suggested that there is at least a concurrence with respect to the reduced level of accomplishment amongst learners in language learning and teaching.

V. General Conclusion

As part of our current research work, we conducted an experiment with learners of the 3rd year foreign languages which allowed us first to make progress on the study of collaborative work as a strategy in the field service for learners in difficulty and summaries as a rewriting technique allowing these learners to access a better understanding of the complex text, and secondly this research has allowed us to open new theoretical and methodological perspectives for didactic research in a multilingual context in general and on the innovation of teaching practices and learning strategies in particular.

We recall that the objective of this research was to study the impact of collaborative work, through restating text, on the understanding of complex text. In other words, we have tried to understand the cognitive behaviour of a learner in a comprehension situation and his ability to rewrite and restitution of a complex expository text in the form of a short summary in order to gain a better understanding.

Thanks to the data and results obtained from the comparative study of the averages of the types of propositions produced by the experimental group and the control group (EG vs CG), we were able to deduce that:

First, collaborative work allows learners to co-build their knowledge in a very enriching collective way; this may be justified by the frequency of the relevant propositions in the texts developed by the experimental groups compared to those designed by the control groups.

Secondly, and contrary to our expectation, collaborative work promotes inferential activity in learners and encourages learners to implement their knowledge and pre-requisites for active construction. The knowledge unlike learners, who work individually, is content to treat the proposed information without resorting to inference to build a logical relationship between this information. We can justify this by the dominant presence of inferred propositions in the experimental group texts compared to that of the control group.

However, on a cognitive level, collaborative work can be an incentive for cognitive wandering thus exposing learners to collectively falling into the gap (although these errors are a learning tool). This appears in the frequency of propositions the texts produced collectively.

These advanced results are consistent with our general hypothesis that the collaborative construction of texts would foster sociocognitive conflicts that are necessary to bring out a collective intelligence that can generate knowledge and consequently the understanding of the expository text.

However, it is important to stress that our research has some limitations: after submitting our results on a statistical test on the "Sigma plot: version 11.0" spreadsheet program, some results were not this demonstrates that this experimentation had to be done with a larger audience.

In addition, we found that some variables and the heterogeneity of the participating groups were neglected and this had a negative impact on participant performance.

Therefore, we will continue in the future our research in the field of didactics of the comprehension and the production of the explanatory texts at the public FOU by proposing as research perspective a study on the contribution of the collaborative work, through of NICTs, on the comprehension of a specialized exhibition text.

Ultimately, we can say that the collective elaboration of restating texts is an effective tool for an active construction of knowledge and enhance learners critical thinking ; it allows the learners to study scientific concepts and their relationships as it also allows the teacher to diversify his teaching practices and to deduce the conceptions and misunderstandings of his learners.

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Teacher's Guide

3as Text Book

People's Democratic Republic of Algeria.
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
Université Dr Tahar MOULAY – Saïda.
Faculty of Arts, Languages and Humanities and Social Sciences.
Department of English

Questionnaire for Secondary Teachers of English in Saïda

The goal of our research is to help us better understand how group work can be an effective tool to improve learners' critical thinking.

Your responses are invaluable to our work.

1) Personal information

1- Age :

2- Gender:

a- Female

b- Male

2) How do you qualify the general level of your learners in English?

a-Deficiency **b- Intermediate** **c- Good**

3) Does it influence their academic performance?

To answer this question, we gave teachers the opportunity to respond with:

a- Yes.

b- No.

4) Do you meet more difficulties in:

a- listening comprehension.

b- reading comprehension

c- oral production

d- Written production.

5) - What support do you prefer more in your teaching practice?

a- Written texts b- Digital media c- Audio-visual aids.

6) What technique do you often use at the time to better understand an expository text?

a- The schematization in the form of a concept map

b- The refund in the form of a summary table.

c- The rewriting as a summary text.

7) Do you think this technique is effective?

a- Yes

b- No

Justify:

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

8) Do you think that collaborative work (in groups) is an effective teaching and learning tool to improve learners' critical thinking and remedy their difficulties?

a- Yes

b- No

People's Democratic Republic of Algeria.
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Faculty of Arts, Languages and Humanities and Social Sciences.
Department of English

Questionnaire for 3rd year FLGES from Dr Saldi Khaifallah Secondary School in Sidi Ahmed.

The goal of our research is to help us better understand how group work can be an effective tool to improve learners' critical thinking.

Your responses are invaluable to our work.

1) Personal information:

3- Age :

4- **Gender:**

b- Female

b- Male

5- **What is your general level in English?**

a- Weak

b- Intermediate

c- Good

2) **Does your teacher make you work in groups in class?**

a-Yes.

b- No.

3) Do you discuss with your peers when working in groups?

a-Yes.

b- No.

4) Do you discuss in English with your classmates during group work?

a-Yes.

b- No.

5) Are you for where against group work?

a- For

b- Against

Justify:

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

6) Which is more effective?

a- Discussing the topic with your peers in groups

b- The topic is being instructed by your teacher

7) Does making discussions with your peers help you understand complex topics?

a- Yes.

b- No

8) Does your teacher encourage you to work in groups so as to make learning better and more motivating?

a- Yes.

b- No

9) Do you meet more difficulties in:

a- Listening comprehension.

b- Reading comprehension.

c- Oral Production.

d- Written Production.

10) Do you have the enough competencies to perform critical thinking?

a- Yes

b- No

Appendix 03:

The expository text:

Counterfeit medicines are a threat to health, and the risks they pose have been largely underestimated. Counterfeits containing no active ingredient will fail to cure disease; those with wrong ingredients may cause mental and physical damage- and even death. No area of the world is unaffected, is exposed by the recent deaths in the United States.

Growing evidence shows that the problem is disproportionately severe in developing and emerging-market countries, which also have the highest burden of infectious diseases. National governments have the primary responsibilities-both in stopping criminal manufacturing and distribution and in protecting their citizens from counterfeit products. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is highly active in fulfilling this responsibility, but this is not true in many other countries in the world.

Multilateral organization such as the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Customs Organization (WCO), and the International Criminal Police (Interpol) must do more to expose the problem and help countries tighten regulatory controls.

Companies affected by counterfeiting in developing countries are expending private resources to perform roles which should be carried out by police and regulators, including assisting multilateral organizations in building capacity among local customs and regulatory officials.

<http://eddirasa.com/wp-content/uploads/bac/2009/eddirasa-bac-lang-eng-2009.pdf>

Appendix 04:

1- Date of Observation
2- Schedule
3- Level
4- Lesson
5- Duration
6- Number of Students
7- Conditions a- Favorable <input type="checkbox"/> b- Average <input type="checkbox"/> c- Unfavorable <input type="checkbox"/>
8- The Activity Observed
9- Support Used by the Teacher
10- Interaction with the Teacher a- Frequently. <input type="checkbox"/> b-Sometimes. <input type="checkbox"/> c- Rare. <input type="checkbox"/> d-Absent. <input type="checkbox"/>
11- Interaction between Learners a- Frequently. <input type="checkbox"/> b- Sometimes. <input type="checkbox"/> c-Rare. <input type="checkbox"/> d-Absent. <input type="checkbox"/>
12- Evaluation of the Activity.....
13- Learners Involvement a- Considerable. <input type="checkbox"/> b- Average. <input type="checkbox"/> c- Weak. <input type="checkbox"/>
14- Other Remarks