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# Cooperative Learning as a Motivational Factor in Improving Students' Level of Writing

The case of 3<sup>rd</sup> year English Students at the University of Dr Moulay Tahar –Saida-  
the

Discertation Submitted to the Department of English Language and Literature in Partial Fulfilment of the  
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## ***Dedications***

***Miss SOUANE Nour el houda***

*I would like to dedicate this modest work to my mother and my father, who offered me love,*

*affection and support;*

*To my brothers, and my sister.*

*To all my friends who have encouraged, supported and prayed for me;*

*To all my teachers, To those who have contributed in the elaboration of this simple  
work.*

***Mrs BENCHEIDA Fatima zohra***

*I dedicate this dissertation to my wonderful family.*

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encouragement and patience.*

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permanent support.*

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## **Abstract**

The present dissertation aims at exploring the effects of cooperative learning on students' level of writing and how it plays a positive role in motivating students to produce better compositions among 3<sup>rd</sup> year LMD students of English department at University Dr Moulay Tahar –Saida-. In order to investigate this correlation, a hypothesis is put forth; it states that the use of cooperative learning strategy creates or fosters students' motivation to improve their level of writing. The research aims at finding whether cooperative learning in writing courses motivates unmotivated students and strengthens those who are already motivated in order to improve their writing level. To check the validity of this hypothesis, first a questionnaire composed of twenty three question is administrated to teachers (a sample of 09 teachers who are teaching or have been teaching written expression to 3<sup>rd</sup> year students) of written expression module at the department of English University Dr Moulay Tahar. After, students are asked to write compositions, which stand as an in-class test (A sample of 160 3<sup>rd</sup> year students at the department of English University Dr Moulay Tahar). Despite the limited scope of the study, the results from analysing the teachers' questionnaire and students' in-class test show that the use of cooperative learning strategy motivates 3<sup>rd</sup> year students of English as a Foreign Language and helps them in facing their weaknesses in writing as well as solving them together. Also the results highlight that there is a great need in using the cooperative learning strategy in writing sessions when learning foreign languages.

## **List of Abbreviations and Acronyms**

**CL:** Cooperative Learning

**CIRC:** Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition

**EFL:** English as a Foreign Language

**ESL:** English as a Second Language

**FL:** Foreign Language

**L1:** First Language

**SL:** Second Language

**SDT:** Self-Determination Theory

**STAD:** Student Team Achievement Divisions

**TGT:** Team Games Tournament

**WE:** Written Expression

**ZPD:** Zone of Proximal Development

**Q:** Question

**3<sup>rd</sup>:** Third Year

**N°:** Number

**%:** Percentage



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## **General Introduction**

One teaching strategy that is considered as an important component of the recent approaches to teaching a second or foreign language is Cooperative Learning. Over the last 15 years Cooperative Learning has been accepted as one of the best methods in education, as it is of great value for all students of all levels. Most researchers have agreed on the fact that cooperative learning has positive effects on learner's learning. According to Jacob et al. (2002: 25), cooperative learning "offers principles and techniques for helping students work together more effectively". In other words, using cooperative learning strategy students to learn better when being in groups. Hill and Flynn (2006: 56) stated "educators have found that cooperative learning groups foster language acquisition in ways that whole-class instruction cannot". This means that, cooperative learning strategy suits the teaching and learning of foreign languages than other methods do. Cooperative learning strategy allows students to be active learners, i.e. the classroom atmosphere is Learner-Centered teaching. In such situation it is thanks to students that the process of teaching and learning is going on.

Such methods tend to have many effective outcomes. One of the most important outcomes cooperative learning strategy offers is motivation to learn. Motivation as well which has seen an enormous increase of its importance during the recent years and many educators have been seeking more knowledge about it. Fontana (1995:149) pointed out that "satisfactory school learning is unlikely to take place in the absence of efficient motivation to learn". That is to say, good learning is unlikely to happen if students are not enough motivated and want to learn.

One of the main subjects in which the use of cooperative learning strategy is needed is in writing. Most teachers has agreed that EFL students do not write as well as teachers expect them to do, the main reason for that according to Smit (1991) is that [...] students do not

Receive a great deal of instructions, practice and feedback in writing .it is assumed that this is due to the ancient method of teaching written expression. Students have to be guided through their writing either by the teacher or by their classmates. Latest researches emphasise on the learning of writing in groups, because students seem to accept criticism better from their group mates than from their teachers. In addition to that, cooperative work in writing courses creates motivation in most students which will push them to produce better writing in order to either achieve common goals or individual goal as in a competitive way. Also recent studies shifted from traditional methods and strategies to modern methods and strategies which are more interested not in the product of learners but in the process through which learners pass when writing.

### **Aim of the study**

This study aims at raising Foreign Language Teachers at the department of languages awareness about the importance of Cooperative Learning Strategy in motivating students to enhance their level of Writing, and enable them to become effective writers.

It also seeks to gain 3<sup>rd</sup> year students' Motivation throughout studying Cooperative Strategy in order to upgrade the level of writing skills.

### **Research Questions and Hypothesis**

In the study, we are going to check whether

- Cooperative Learning as a motivational technique has any effect on the level of writing of students of English as a foreign language at the Department of languages at the University of Saida.

- 3<sup>rd</sup> year students of English at the department of foreign languages at the university of Saida can be motivated to improve their level of writing.

To achieve that the following question is asked:

-What effects does Cooperative Learning strategy has on motivating 3<sup>rd</sup> year students of English as a foreign language to ameliorate their writing skills?

Accordingly, we hypothesize that if 3<sup>rd</sup> year students of English as a foreign language at the department of languages at the university of Saida are writing under the cooperative learning strategy they would be motivated to achieve a better writing production.

### **Research Methodology**

To verify the truth or fallacy of the above hypothesis, a correlation is made between two variables cooperative learning strategy, and students' motivation to improve writing level.

Also a descriptive method will be also used about analyzing quantitative data, this method will comprise a questionnaire of 21 questions to 09 teachers of Written Expression at the Department of Foreign Languages at the University of Saida.

In addition to an experimental design which uses the population of 3<sup>rd</sup> year students of English as a foreign language at the Department of languages at the University of Saida. The sample of students is of 30 students, it is about (37%) of the whole population. At the beginning, students are taught to write with the traditional method which is the individual strategy i.e. they write compositions individually with no interaction between each other. Then they are asked to write individual compositions to be used in this study. After that, for about 3 days, we introduced the modern method which is the cooperative strategy (work in small groups), six groups are asked to write cooperative copies to be used with the individual one as the in-class test.

## **Organization of the Research**

This dissertation is divided into three chapters. They come after the general introduction which aims at giving reasons behind the study, the statement of the problem and the organization of the research. The first chapter in turn is divided into two parts. The first part includes a literature review on cooperative learning including its definition, characteristics and theoretical background. The second part includes one of the cooperative outcomes which is motivation. This second part deals with the definition based on many theories in addition to its relation with the cooperative learning strategy.

The second chapter is concerned with writing, its definition, components and stages in developing writing, passing by its role in ESL/EFL classroom and ending with its teaching approaches and its relation with motivation.

The third chapter includes the practical study which is about the investigation and the analysis of the research data collected their evaluation, interpretation and the discussion. It deals first with the description of the population, moving to the description of the tools of research then dealing with the analysis and discussion of both teachers' questionnaire and students' in-class writing test. The chapter ends with providing some research recommendations and pedagogical implications based on the results, in addition to confirming the research hypothesis.



## **Chapter One: Cooperative Learning**

### **Introduction**

As opposed to traditional methods of teaching and learning second or foreign languages (SL/ FL); where the classroom was teacher centered more than learner centered; where learners were passive receivers of the knowledge taught by their teachers. Recent approaches to teaching and learning SL and FL emphasize the importance of building, discovering and transforming learners' knowledge by both teachers and learners, and in this case teachers guarantee the activeness of the learners.

One of the main effective methods of these recent approaches is communicating in the classroom. This implies the interaction between the learners. When communicating learners exchange knowledge about the content and the form of the language at the same time. Learners working cooperatively would highly gain new communicative skills, and social skills. Cooperative learning generates great motivation among students. This chapter, is going to be about cooperative learning as a general method that can be applied in many academic subjects through presenting its conceptual definition, comparing it with other methods and structures, giving its theoretical background, criteria for using this method effectively, and its benefits.

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

#### **1.1.1. Conceptual Definition**

Ravenscroft, Buckless and Hassall (1999) identify Cooperative Learning (CL) as the learning that “characterises those learning approaches in which peer interaction plays a significant role, but where content and construction of knowledge are still determined and driven by the faculty member”. Also Bonwell and Eison (1991) view Cooperative Learning as a subpart of active learning which means that active learning reduces passivity and makes students aware of what they are learning and enable them to be active participants in the

learning process. Olsen and Kagan (1992) think that Cooperative learning is group learning activity organized so that learning is dependent on the socially structured exchange of information between learners in groups and in which each learner is held accountable for his or her own learning and is motivated to increase the learning of others. For Slavin (1995: 2) Cooperative Learning is the “variety of teaching methods in which students work in small groups to help one another learn academic content”. In other words, Cooperative Learning comprises different techniques which push students to work together in small groups in order to achieve their shared academic goals. Slavin (2006) states that Cooperative Learning is when students cooper, discover and comprehend difficult concepts when they talk to each other about a given problem.

For Johnson et al. (1984: 14) Cooperative Learning “is much more than being physically near other students, discussing materials with other students, helping other students or sharing material among students, although each of these is so important in cooperative learning”.

### **1.1.2. The Differences between Cooperative Learning, Competitive and Individualistic Methods**

William and Burden (1997) refer to the way teachers can organize their language lessons as classroom structure. Classroom structures include many instructional processes among which cooperative, individualistic and competitive structures.

Johnson and Johnson (1975 cited in Johnson et al., 1984) and Deutsch (1962) explain that teachers structure their lessons competitively so that students work against each other to achieve a goal that only one or few students can obtain, and they can succeed if and only if the others fail to achieve their goals, this is a negative interdependence.

Other structure for teachers’ lessons is the individual work, so that students work by themselves for the achievement of their proper goals unrelated to those of the other students (Deutsch, 1962, Johnson and Johnson, 1975 cited in Johnson et al., 1984).

The third possible lessons structure is in a cooperative way, so that students work together to accomplish shared goals. Students are gathered in small groups and assigned on a given material. In the Cooperative learning there is a positive interdependence which means that each student knows that his/her goals won't be achieved if and only if all the members' goals are achieved (Deutsch 1962, Johnson and Johnson, 1975 as cited in Johnson et al., 1984).

From another point of view, Smith (1996) claims that the differences between cooperative, competitive and individualistic learning are based on "the norm of interaction" through which learners perceive each other. Smith's (1996) opinion means that the structure used in the classroom is determined by the way students exchange ideas with each other during the process of learning. If there is a competition between students so the main classroom structure tends then to be competitive, too. If students do not interact with each other, then the dominant structure of the classroom is the individualistic one.

Johnson & Johnson (1999 as cited in Attle and Baker, 2007) recognize the necessity to integrate cooperative learning and competitive individual learning. They think also that cooperation and competition are very different ways of approaching the act of learning which, when combined, provide potential benefits to student.

Attle and Baker (2007) suggest a combination of cooperative and competitive learning which they think would be more beneficial.

### **1.1.3. Cooperative Learning versus Collaborative Learning**

Cooperative and collaborative learning are sometimes regarded as synonyms and used in the same sense (Encyclopedia of Education). According to Pantiz (1996) and McWhaw et al (2003) there are major differences between the two of them.

Bruffee (1995) thinks that cooperative and collaborative learning differ from one another in two major aspects; the development of each method for educating people from different ages, experience and levels of mastery of the craft of interdependence, that's one aspect. The

other aspect is the nature and authority of knowledge. Therefore, cooperative learning is according to Bruffee (1995), best used with elementary and secondary schools. Whereas collaboration learning fits more adults and adolescent students like those in college and faculty.

Pantiz (1996: 1) defines collaboration and cooperation learning as being “Collaboration is a personal philosophy of interaction and personal lifestyle whereas cooperation is a structure of interaction designed to facilitate the accomplishment of an end product or goal”. According to Pantiz (1996) in the cooperative model the teacher maintains complete control of the class, even though the students work in groups to accomplish a goal of a course. The cooperative teacher gives to the students a given task and when they face any difficulty in providing information the teacher proposes additional articles to the students to read and analyze and then asks the students to work in groups to complete the task. In such a situation students are following instructions and directions given by the teacher, the process of learning is more controlled by the teacher. In contrast to that, Pantiz (1996) states that the collaborative model groups would assume almost total responsibility, determine if they have enough information for completing the task and provide themselves with the needed information. Even if sometime the teacher interferes to give some suggestions, collaborative learning is still student centred.

Pantiz (1996) adds that the purpose of the collaborative learning is building students’ responsibility for actions including learning and respecting the abilities and contributions of the peers, as opposed to the purpose of the cooperative learning which is the achievement of specific goals through jointly working together.

## **1.2. Theoretical Background of Cooperative Learning**

The cooperative learning is supported by many theories; each one of them tries to give evidence for the effectiveness of using cooperative learning. Among these theories, there are:

behavioural learning theory, cognitive theories, motivational theories and social interdependence or social cohesion theory.

### **1.2.1. Behavioural Learning Theory**

Johnson et al. (1998) suggest that students are likely to work hard when there is some kind of reward; since cooperative learning focuses on individual and group rewards, it is more probably assumed to help students to learn. Actions are determined by motivation which can be shaped by rewards and goals (Ravenscroft et al., 1999). Slavin (1995) and Slavin et al. (2003) name this theory “motivational theory”.

According to the motivationalist perspective (Johnson and Johnson, 1992; Slavin, 1983 and 1995), cooperative learning creates a situation in which group members can attain their own personal goals as if the group is successful. Slavin (1995) pointed out that when students are rewarded for their success whether it is group success or individual success; they tend to encourage and motivate their peers to exert maximum effort to reach their group or individual goals.

### **1.2.2. Cognitive Theories**

Slavin (1995) states that cognitive theories emphasize the effects of cooperative work in itself and he reported that there are several different cognitive theories which are classified mainly in two major categories; developmental theories and cognitive elaboration theories. For a clearer picture of these theories we are going to mention more details about them in the following part.

#### **1.2.2.1. Developmental Theories**

The fundamental assumption of developmental theories is that interaction among children around appropriate tasks increases their mastery of critical concepts (Damon, 1984 & Murray, 1982 as cited in Slavin, 1995). According to Vygotsky’s theory (1978), children can do more with the help and guidance of an adult or another more experienced person than they can do

by themselves . Slavin (1995) on his part argues that in Vigotsky's view which claims that due to collaborative work some children tend to grow and take some responsibilities in order to guide the others and learn what they cannot learn on their own. In other words, children of the same age know better what others know and do not know and for that they try to help each other whenever facing something which won't be achieved without the help of others.

Vygotsky (1978) also emphasises the importance of more competent peers when they help less able students because what can be done once with help from more able students, can be done another time by oneself. Vygotsky (1978) also states that the space between the person's actual level of development (i.e., what can be done individually) and the potential level of development (i.e., what can be done with the help of someone else) is called the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). Vygotsky's theory (1978) (as cited in Gillies and Ashman, 2003: 11) states that students learn by interacting with adults or more capable peers who scaffold or mediate learning so that they are able to complete tasks they could not do alone. Webb and Farivar (1994) observe that students are often more aware of what other students do not understand, so, by helping them to focus on the relevant features of the problem, they can often explain it to them in a way that can be readily understood. Moreover, as students interact together, they have opportunities to model their thinking, reasoning and problem solving skills on each other, receive a feedback, and as a result socially construct new understandings, knowledge and skills (King, 1999).

Similarly Piaget (1926 as cited in Slavin, 1995) holds that social –arbitrary knowledge – language ,values ,rules , morality ,and symbol systems (such as reading and math ) can be learned only in interaction with others .Once more Piaget (1959) suggests that peers serve as resources for one another in cognitive development .

Piaget gives the learner an active role in the learning process, because according to Bentham (2002), Piaget thinks that when the learner is provided with situations where he can have cognitive conflict that would lead to learning new knowledge.

According to Gillies and Ashman (2003), Piaget (1932) argues that cognitive conflicts happened when the learners face a contradiction that occurs when interacting with others. It means when learners are re-examining this understanding and gained knowledge when they realise that the others have different opinions. In this case learners seek additional information to clarify the contradictions to build a new knowledge.

Damon (1984) thinks that putting students in peers is a good strategy for them to change their ideas, opinions, and knowledge and they can be motivated to reconcile their differences. Furthermore they are more receptive to their peer's ideas and critics than to those of the teacher. In other words they accept their peer's ideas as less threatening (Damon, 1984).

#### **1.2.2.2. Cognitive Elaboration Theories**

For Slavin (1995) cognitive elaboration perspective is different from the developmental point of view. According to him research in cognitive psychology has found that if information is to be retained in memory and related to information already in memory, the learner must engage in some sort of cognitive restructuring, or elaboration of the material (Wittrock, 1978 as cited in Slavin, 1995). Donald Dansereau and his colleagues have found in a series of studies that college students working on structured "cooperative scripts" can learn technical material or procedures far better than can students working alone (Dansereau, 1985).

Slavin (1995) also argues that the cognitive theory which holds the interactions among students will increase students' achievement for reasons which have to do with mental processing of information rather than with motivation. In other words, learning is a process of

constructing knowledge through cognitive processes like reflective abstraction, recognition and so on (Cohen et al., 2004).

### **1.2.3. Social Interdependence Theory**

Slavin (1995) points out that this theoretical perspective is somehow related to the motivational perspective that states that the effects of cooperative learning on achievement are strongly mediated by the cohesiveness of the group, in essence that students will help one another learn because they care about one another and want one another to succeed. In contrast to the motivational theory which holds that students help their group mates learn because it is in their own interests to do so; the social interdependence theory emphasises the idea that students help their group mates learn because they care about the group (Slavin, 1995). Social interdependence exists when the outcomes of individuals are affected by each other's actions (Johnson & Johnson, 1989). There are two types of social interdependence: positive, when the actions of individuals promote the achievement of joint goals, and negative, when the actions of individuals obstruct the achievement of each other's goals (Johnson and Johnson, 2005). According to Johnson, Johnson and Smith (1998), social interdependence theory believes that cooperative learning is a result of positive interdependence among individual's goals.

### **1.2.4. Motivational theories:**

Motivational perspectives on cooperative learning focus primarily on the reward or goal structures under which student operate (Slavin, 1993). Deutch (1949) (as cited in Slavin, 1995) identifies three goal structures: cooperative, where each individual's goal-oriented efforts contribute to other's goal attainment; competitive, where each individual's goal-oriented efforts frustrate other's goal attainment; and individualistic where individual's goal-oriented efforts have no consequence for other goal attainment.



Slavin (1995:16) reports that from a motivational perspective (such as those of Johnson et al. 1981 and Slavin, 1983),”cooperative goal structures create a situation in which the only way group work can attain their own personal goals is if the group is successful”. Therefore, to achieve their own personal goals, group members must help their group mates to do anything which may help the group to succeed, in addition to encourage them to make more efforts (Slavin, 1983). In other words giving the group some rewards on the bases of their performance will create an interpersonal reward structure in which group members will give or withhold social reinforcers (such as praise and encouragement ) in response to group mates' task –related efforts (Slavin, 1983). Once again Slavin (1995:17) identifies that “In cooperative classroom, a student who tries hard, attends class regularly, and helps others to learn is praised and encouraged by group mates, much in contrast with the situation in a traditional class”

Madden and Slavin (1983) all find that student in Cooperative learning classes feel that their classmates want them to learn. In cooperative groups, learning becomes an activity that gets students ahead in their peer group. Slavin (1975) and Slavin, De Vries, and Hulten (1975) find that students in cooperative groups who gained in achievement improved their social status in the classroom, whereas in traditional classes such students lose status. These changes in the social consequences of academic success can be very important. Colmen (1961) finds that bright students in high schools in which academic achievement helped a student to be accepted by the “leading crowd” turned their efforts more toward learning than bright students in schools in which athletic or social achievement was considered more important. Brookover, Beady, Flood, Schweizer, and Wisenbake (1979) find that student's support for academic goals was the most important predictor of their achievement (controlling for ability and social class). Clearly, cooperative goals create proacademic norms among students, which have important effects on student achievement.

### **1.3. Criteria that Make Cooperative Learning Effective**

The success of CL is crucially dependent on the nature and organization of group work. This requires a structured and carefully designed program of learning so that learners interact with each other and are motivated to increase each other's learning (Rodgers and Richards, 2001). Olsen and Kagan (1992) propose five key elements of successful group-based learning in CL. The first element is "positive interdependence" which occurs when group members feel that what helps one member helps all and what hurts one member hurts all. It is created by the structure of CL tasks and by building a spirit of mutual support within the group. For Johnson et al. (1984) positive interdependence means that students' goals won't be achieved if they work independently, if they do not divide the material studied, and if each one of them does not take a role in the group. Johnson and Johnson (2005) suggest that positive interdependence includes mutual goals, joint rewards, resource interdependence (each group member has different resources that must be combined to complete the assignment). When established successfully, positive interdependence results in students' recognizing that their individual success is inextricably linked to the success of every other member of the group (Frey et al., 2009). The second element is "individual accountability" for mastering the assigned material; which means that everyone has to participate in the work, to be responsible and each group member is assigned a specific role (Johnson et al., 1984). Slavin (1995) states that the importance of individual accountability is to provide students with an incentive to help each other and to encourage each other to put forth maximum effort. The next element is "social skills" which determine the way students interact with each other as teammates (Olsen and Kagan, 1992). The interaction between students cannot be fulfilled without practising interpersonal and small group skills as named by Johnson et al. (1984). Examples of these social skills are conflict management, decision making, communication, and trust building skills. When working together in cooperative groups, students have to be socially skilled and

to be motivated to use their social skills when working with the others (Johnson and Johnson 1984). The fourth element is “structuring and structures” which refers to ways of organizing students’ interaction (Olsen and Kagan, 1992). This characteristic is labelled by Johnson et al. (1984 cited in Johnson et al., 2008) “face-to-face interactions” which give the students the chance to support each other, academically and personally.

The last element proposed by Johnson and Johnson (2005) is “group processing” where students take some time to discuss how well they are achieving their goals and maintain effective working relationship among members through controlling and managing their improvement, actions, problems and solutions.

Many researchers emphasize the importance of these two elements, namely positive interdependence and individual accountability. For example, Slavin (1995) states that these two characteristics are the only two, among many others, that are shared between almost all the activities and models of cooperative learning.

Additional conditions for an effective cooperative learning have been given by Hill and Flynn (2006) to ensure the effectiveness of cooperative learning. These conditions are forming groups in a heterogeneous way, using small groups composed from two up to four members, and applying cooperative learning consistently combining it with other instructional methods.

#### **1.4. Types of Cooperative Learning Methods**

For a clearer picture of the different types of cooperative learning methods, this part will include the methods suggested by Slavin in more detail.

##### **1.4.1. Student Team Achievement Divisions (STAD)**

For Slavin (1991), this is the simplest method of all cooperative methods. In this method students are assigned to mixed groups of four to five members, their levels range from low to average and high as well and they are from different ethnic origins. Each week these students

are introduced to a new material in a lecture and then team members will study work sheets on that material in order to make sure that all team members have mastered the lesson. After that they are supposed to work and discuss problems or quizzes on that material .This latter has to be given regularly by the teacher and the students are not supposed to help each other for answering those quizzes. Moreover a team scoring of 30 to 40 minutes has to be done at the end of the week. Last but not least a weekly one page class newsletter will show if the students level has ameliorated or not (Slavin, 1991). At that time, the change in the classroom will be noticed as Slavin (1991:19) points out:

Suddenly students begin to help each other learn basic skills instead of resenting those who know the answers and making them fun of those who do not. They begin to see the teacher as a resource person who has valuable information that they need to accomplish something important, more like a coach than a boss, they begin to see learning activities social instead of isolated , fun instead of boring , under their own control instead of the teacher's .

#### **1.4.2. Team Games Tournament (TGT)**

As Slavin reports this method of team learning has the same principle as STAD , it uses the same teams ,instructional format and worksheets ,however student in here play academic games instead of answering quizzes for the sake of proving their individual mastery of the subject matter .The team members compete each other in weekly tournament in which they compete with members of other groups .After that the scores are figured out and a newsletter will highlight the highest scoring teams and tournament table winners (Slavin, 1991).

So this method uses more or less the same pattern of teaching of STAD, but the use of academic games instead of quizzes makes it more exciting and motivating than the previous method (Slavin, 1991).

### **1.4.3. Jigsaw**

According to Slavin (1991) students in this cooperative method of learning are assigned to six member teams and the academic material is divided into five parts. Each member reads his or her unique section and then the students of different teams who share the same section meet and discuss their sections. The only way to understand other's sections is to listen to the classmates, this way student will be motivated to follow and show interest towards other's work (Slavin, 1991). Another method which is much easier than Jigsaw is Jigsaw II which will be described in what follows in more details.

According to Slavin, Jigsaw II is mostly applied when the studied material is in written form. It is most appropriate in the fields of social studies, literature and some parts of science. Jigsaw II uses chapters, stories, biographies or similar descriptive materials. Similarly to STAD and TGT, Jigsaw II works with heterogeneous teams, they are given chapters or other units to read, and then they are handed "expert sheets" that contain different topics for each team member to focus on when reading. When finishing reading students with the same topic and from different teams "expert group" meet and discuss their topics and then get back to their groups in order to teach their group mates about what they were discussing. Finally students take assessment that covers all the topics, this latter is based on the individual improvement and students with the high grade will obtain certificates. This way the students will be motivated to study the material well and try so hard to make their group mates grasp the information and get high scores at the end (Slavin, 1995).

### **1.4.4. Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC)**

This method according to Stevens et al., (1987 as cited in Slavin 1991) is the newest method of the Students Learning methods; it is about a comprehensive program for teaching reading and writing in the upper elementary and middle grades. Slavin (1991) as well points out that in this method teachers use readers and reading groups similarly as in the traditional

method but in here the students are grouped in pairs from two different reading groups instead of working alone. At the time the teacher works with one reading team, the other groups are working in pairs on other activities as reading to one another, making expectations about how the stories will end up, summarizing stories and practicing spelling. Students may also practice other tasks such as, writing drafts, revising, editing and correcting each other's work in addition to preparing a class book for publication. The aim behind this cooperative learning method is to get the text's main idea and other comprehension skills.

#### **1.4.5. Other Cooperative Learning Methods**

##### **1.4.5.1. Group Investigation**

Sharan & Sharan, 1992 (as cited in Slavin, 1995) claims that it is a general classroom organization in which students work in small groups using cooperative inquiry, group discussion and cooperative planning and projects. As Slavin (1995) points out this method is appropriate for acquisition, analysis and synthesis of information. In this method, two to six member groups choose topics from a unit studied before by all their classmates, divide them into individual parts and they are required at the end to prepare a group report. Finally they have to display their findings to the whole class.

##### **1.4.5.2. Learning Together**

It is among the most widely used cooperative learning methods of those developed by David and Roger Johnson and their colleagues at the University of Minnesota. Their methods emphasise four elements.

- a) Face to face interaction: students work in four –to –five –member groups.
- b) Positive interdependence: students work together to achieve a group goal.
- c) Individual accountability: students must show that they have individually mastered the material.

d) Interpersonal and small –group skills: Students must be taught effective means of working together and discussing how well their groups are working to achieve their goals.

(Johnson, et al., 1984 as cited in Slavin, 1995: 129)

The Johnson’s methods have many common points with STAD in using heterogeneous learning groups and emphasizing positive interdependence and individual accountability .In other words when applying this methods many common aims have to be achieved .As Smith et al) reports, students when applying the learning together method they follow seven rules which are:

- a) I am critical of ideas, not people.
- b) I remember that we are all in this together.
- c) I encourage everyone to participate.
- d) I listen to everyone's idea, even if I do not agree with them.
- e) I restate what someone said if it is not clear.
- f) I try to understand both side of the issue.
- g) I first bring out all the ideas, then I put them together.

(Smith et al., 1981 as cited in Slavin, 1995:129-130)

To conclude, all the cooperative learning methods are very significant to achieve academic goals even though they are different in many aspects.

## **1.5. Benefits of Cooperative Learning**

### **1.5.1. Learning strategies**

When using cooperative learning, learners practise many strategies either directly or indirectly. Explaining, arguing, negotiating meaning, repeating key words several times, and using words in actual contexts are important to be used in cooperative learning (Hill

Flynn, 2006). Oxford (1990) considers these techniques as examples of memory and cognitive strategies.

Autonomy and responsibility are two metacognitive strategies (Oxford, 1990) that result from well-structured cooperative group (Brown, 2001). In other words, if well-planned cooperative learning is used, students become responsible for their individual learning and group's learning, and for the groups' benefits as a whole, which make all learners autonomous and responsible.

When learners use cooperative learning, they have to agree on certain goals and specific ways to achieve those goals. This obliges them to understand each others' point of view and to try to be aware of how others think and feel. Finkbeiner (2004) assumes that this is one of the crucial outcomes of using foreign language learning.

### **1.5.2. Achievement Outcomes**

Cooperative learning produces greater student achievement than traditional learning methodologies (Slavin, 1984 and Gambrell, 2007). Haynes (2007) indicates that for English language learners (EELs), using cooperative group activities would help them achieve their academic goals because they are involved in "comprehensible output" and, at the same time, receiving "comprehensible input"; both have almost the same importance in learning language.

Slavin (1984) argues that students who work individually must compete against their peers to gain praise or other forms of reward and reinforcement. In this type of competition many individuals attempt to accomplish a goal with only a few winners and the success of these individuals can mean failures for others. There are more winners in a cooperative team because all members reap from the success of an achievement. Low achieving students tend to work harder when grouped with higher achieving students (Slavin, 1984). Hill and Flynn (2006) think that interaction is the most important component of cooperative group work that



helps to build new knowledge. This means that through negotiating meaning and explaining points of view, learners adjust their speech and ideas “comprehensible output” to their peers’ levels and needs so that their peers gain a new knowledge “comprehensible input”. For Johnson et al. (1984), when learning situations are structured cooperatively rather than competitively or individualistically; they promote greater competencies of critical thinking and greater perceptions of the grading system as being fair. Slavin (1991) also states that forty studies of four weeks duration have evaluated teams achievement divisions, team accelerated instruction and cooperative integrated reading and composition. In all the studies it was compared between these methods and the traditional approach in regular classes and without aides. In 33 studies out of the 40 that was conducted it was figured out that students learn significantly more than those in the traditional method, whereas in the seven remaining studies it was noticed no difference (Slavin, 1987 as cited in Slavin 1991).

### **1.5.3. Social Outcomes**

Cooperative learning has social benefits as well as academic. One of the essential elements of cooperative learning is the development of social skills. First, cooperative learning provides respect for others and cooperation between students (Hohn, 2005). When learners help their peers and feel helped by others, they start to build and strengthen their relationship with them and maximise their respect for them. Slavin (2006) and Stenvens (2008) think that these social effects, most importantly, would go beyond time and place of using cooperative group work. In other words, the positive relationships that are built in the classroom are proved to remain even outside the classroom and after ending the cooperative work.

Cooperative learning experiences promote linking among students regardless of differences in ability level, sex, handicapping, conditions, ethnic membership, social class, and task orientation (Johnson et al., 1984). Cooperative learning does not only affect

relationships with other students, it also affects relationships with adults in the school, like the teacher (Johnson and Johnson, 1983).

#### **1.5.4. Affective Outcomes**

According to Brown (2001), the use of cooperative learning makes learners feel secure from criticism; this feeling has great effect on the effectiveness of cooperative learning. Johnson and Johnson (2005) note that the feeling of commitment learners have when they are involved in the cooperative work will decrease their “disruptive” and “off-task behaviour”. It is the students’ feeling of participation in something meaningful and having active role in it that lead to commitment and feeling engaged in the activity. Students develop considerable commitment and caring for each other no matter what their impression and attitudes toward each other were (Johnson et al., 1984).

#### **1.6. Motivation and its Relation to Cooperative Learning**

Motivation may be defined as the force that energizes, directs and sustains behaviour towards a goal (Baron, 1992; Pintrch & Shunk, 1996). Brophy (1988) describes the motivation in learning when the student finds that the academic activities are meaningful and worthwhile when deriving the intended benefits of those activities. (Biehler & Snowman, 1997) reported that students are either motivated or they are not. However Johnson and others find that, when students become more engaged in their learning, their motivation upgrades. They also state that students in order to be motivated they need enough opportunity to interact with each other in other words by assigning students to groups and by giving them tasks which require interdependence, students will be motivated by the team efforts and by seeing their contribution accepted by the others (Johnson & Johnson, 1989). A research was conducted also proved that students when working in groups and are asked to perform defined tasks with the expectation that they will be rewarded on the basis of group success can be an effective

instructional method (Johnson et al., 1981; Sharan, 1980 & Slavin, 1990 & 1996). In this segment of the research, different motivational theories are introduced with more details.

### **1.6.1. Motivational Theories: Overview**

Most models and research on academic cognition did not address issues of motivation or emotion and how these factors might facilitate or constrain cognition and learning. Fortunately, this state of affairs has changed dramatically over the last 20 years of research. Cognitive researchers (e.g., Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 1999) now recognize the importance of motivational constructs in shaping cognition and learning in academic settings (Handbook of psychology, 2003). It is argued that motivation is one of the important factors influencing learners' achievement (influencing L2 achievement) because it determines the extent of learners' involvement in learning tasks and functions as momentum to help them keep working on the difficult adventures of learning (Crookes & Schmidt, 1991; Dornyei, 1994; Gardner, 1985; Oxford & Shearin, 1996). Although many researchers agree on the undeniable effects of motivation, they have not yet agreed on a unique theory to explain or define motivation. Woolfolk (2004) suggest four approaches to motivation: behavioural, cognitive, humanistic and social.

#### **1.6.1.1. Behavioral Approach**

From a behavioural perspective, motivation is seen as quite simply the anticipation of reward (Brown, 2007). The behavioural view insists on the impact of reinforcement on motivating desired behaviour (Williams & Burden, 1997). For Brown (2007), when learners are driven to acquire positive reinforcement, and driven by previous experiences of rewards for behaviour, they act accordingly to achieve further reinforcement. In a behavioural view, performance in tasks and motivation to do so is likely to be at the mercy of external forces: parents, teachers, peers, educational requirements, job specifications, and so forth (Brown, 2007).

Brophy (2004) find that motivational reinforcement should be given immediately after a performance and that education should use positive reinforcers such as verbal praise and informative feedback rather than negative reinforcements such as threats and surveillance.

### **1.6.1.2. Cognitive Approach**

Cognitive perspective focuses on the role of learners' through, expectations, and understanding of the world (Feldman, 1997). In other words, learners do not react on the events or others' behaviour but on the interpretation of these events and actions. For cognitive theorists, motivation places much more emphasis on the individual's decisions (Brown, 2007). According to Woolfolk (2004), cognitive theory includes attribution theory, goal theory, expectancy & value theory, and self-schemas theory.

#### **1.6.1.2.1. Attribution Theory**

Attribution theory tries to find reasons and justifications for why things happen, it is about answering the question "why do people do something" (Alderman, 2004). In other words, attribution theory of motivation seeks for finding explanation and justification for success or failure. According to Weiner (1985), students attribute successes and failure to sources such as effort, ability, task difficulty and luck.

Weiner (1984) stated that individuals search for explanations and causes by forming attributions and that these causes are classified into three dimensions. First dimension is "locus of control" which considers the causes on an event being external or internal. Second dimension is "the stability" of the cause sometimes referred to as "constancy", it means that the cause can be stable (permanent) or instable (temporary). The last dimension is "controllability" which refers to the degree to which learners feel they can control or not the perceived cause.

#### **1.6.1.2.2. Expectancy & Value Theory**

According to Brophy (2004), the expectancy & value model of motivation holds that the effort that people are willing to expend on a task is the product of the degree to which they expect to be able to perform the task successfully if they apply themselves and thus the degree to which they expect to get whatever rewards that successful task performance will bring, and the degree to which they value those rewards as well as the opportunity to engage in the processes involved in performing the task itself. It means that learners' motivation to achieve a particular task stems from their expectation of a reward and from their belief in their ability to control, perform, or accomplish a task.

#### **1.6.1.2.3. Goal Theory**

Researches on motivation has shifted from describing learners as motivated by needs and drives to describing them as proactively setting goals and planning strategies for accomplishing these goals (Brophy, 2004). Dweck is one of the first researchers to study what is now known as goal theory (Diener & Dweck, 1978 & 1980; Dweck, 1975, 1986; Dweck & Leggett, 1988). Goal theory posits that students' motivation and behaviour are related to the goals they pursue each goal is associated with specific patterns of behaviours (Davis et al., 1998).

Slavin (2006) claims that researchers in goal theory have distinguished between two types of goals: learning goal known as mastery goals and performance known as ego-involvement goals. Learning goals refer to those goals learners set when they concentrate on learning what their teacher is teaching them through tasks; they want to have mastery over the abilities taught and improve their achievement in a task (Alderman, 2004; Brophy, 2004). On the other hand, performance goals are those goals learners set to keep a positive self-image, and give to others an image of capability (Brophy, 2004).

#### **1.6.1.2.4. Self- Schemas Theory**

The theory argues that what students believe about themselves in an aspect that should be considered in explaining motivation. Woolfolk (2004) insists on the motivational effect of learners' self-schemas, which includes self-efficacy, the learners' beliefs about their effectiveness in certain areas, and his beliefs about his ability and his self-esteem. Brown (2007: 154) argues that "no successful cognitive or affective activity can be carried out without some degree of self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-efficacy".

Self-Efficacy is an important aspect of motivational learning because of the focus on acquiring skills and knowledge, rather than on completing activities only (Schunk, 1985). This means that, when talking about self-efficacy in learning, one refers to the opinion learners have about their own abilities to achieve a specific activity. Self-efficacy is not concerned with knowledge, skills or strategies; it is related to what learners think they can do under specific conditions (Bandura, 1997).

Coopersmith (1967: 4) made a well-accepted definition of self-esteem which "refers to the evaluation which individuals make and customarily maintain with regard to themselves; it expresses an attitude of approval or disapproval, and indicates the extent to which individuals believe themselves capable, significant, successful and worthy".

#### **1.6.1.3. The Humanistic Approach**

From a Humanistic perspective, to motivate means to look at the human as an entire individual who has many components and to make the links between elements in order to understand human behaviour. The two main theories of the humanistic view is Maslow's Needs Theory and Self-Determination Theory (STD).

#### **1.6.1.3.1. Maslow's Needs Theory**

Abraham Maslow's needs theory has been considered a pillar in motivation theory since the 1940's. This theory suggests that motivation comes from the inside of the human, and that cognitive, affective and physical needs are all interrelated (Cohen et al., 2004).

Maslow (1970; cited in Brown, 2001) highlights a system of needs inside each individual and orders them hierarchically like a pyramid. The lowest level concerns the psychological needs that consist of basic instinctive needs such as hunger, thirst, and sleep. Then safety needs level which includes aspects such as freedom, shelter, and protection. The upper layer is the level of love and belongingness needs that refer to personal identity, to be capable of occupying a respected place within a group. After that there is esteem needs level which is related to the fact that humans need to feel confident, independent, and to be appreciated by the others. And the highest level consists of self-actualisation needs that refer to one's desire to express themselves creatively and to develop one's potential fully (Brophy, 2004).

Feldman (1997) argues that Maslow has explained that each level of these needs cannot be achieved unless other lower needs are achieved. But according to Gorman (2003: 61) "Maslow himself recognised that some high achievers would go without these basic needs for long periods of time in order to devote themselves to their work".

#### **1.6.1.3.2. Self-Determination Theory (SDT)**

Deci and Ryan (2000: 65) argue that the contribution of self-determination to the study of human motivation cannot be fulfilled unless it takes into account "innate psychological needs that are the basis of their self-motivation and personality integration as well as for the conditions that foster those positive processes". This means that SDT examines human behaviour as an attempt to satisfy internal psychological needs and develop one's personality traits.

In the STD Deci & Ryan, (2000) distinguish two distinct types of motivation based on the goals and reasons that initiate our behaviour, intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. Deci and Ryan (2000a) defined intrinsic motivation as doing something based on inherent interest in the activity, and extrinsic motivation as doing something based on rewards and outcome not related to the activity itself.

Deci and Ryan (2000a: 54) make the distinction between an individual who is unmotivated; “person who feels no impetus or inspiration to act” or “a motivated” as they also call this category of individuals and another who is motivated; “someone who is energised or activated toward an end”.

#### **1.6.1.4. Social Conceptions of Motivation**

Learning does not occur in isolated places where you learn on your own without the help of any other person. Slavin (2006) emphasises the role of context, social environment and communities in the conception of learning, mainly to test validity and importance of learners’ beliefs, and their ideas by comparing them to the beliefs and ideas of others who are members of the culture around them. Woolfolk (2004: 356) claims that “students are motivated to learn if they are members of a classroom or school community that value learning”. According to Woolfolk (2004), in such communities, learners become able to build their identities. Brown (2007) adds that learners have different ways and strategies for being motivated and therefore act in different ways that are unique.

### **1.6.2. Cooperative Learning and the Theories of Motivation**

#### **1.6.2.1. Cooperative and Cognitive Approach of Motivation**

##### **1.6.2.1.1. Cooperative Learning and Self-Schemas**

Brophy (2004) advocates that cooperative learning is a strategy that emphasizes, reduces or manages the effects on self-esteem, self-efficacy, and self- worth protection.



Self-esteem is one aspect of self-schemas that is enhanced through using cooperative learning. Brophy (2004) claims that the forms of cooperative learning establish social interaction and friendship among group members which both result in building self-esteem. Johnson, Johnson and Smith (1998) prove the existence of this result even in college. This means that the mutual respect and support among students create friendship and positive interaction which are extremely correlated with maintaining positive self-esteem for learners.

Self-efficacy is another positive result of cooperative learning that Hohn (2005) insists on especially for less competent students because when working together learners are able to achieve their goals through joint effort, existing abilities of the group members and supportive help. Johnson and Johnson (2003) believe that the manner the group members use the resources they have, help each other to reach shared desired goal and the importance of the contribution of all the members formulate feeling in the learners that what they cannot do alone, they can do it together and what they are able to do together today, they will do it alone another day.

Another aspect of self-schemas is self-worth which is the result of using cooperative learning because learners feel valued by their peers when they participate in the learning activities (Brophy, 2004). This is what Johnson and Johnson (2003: 118) state when saying “helping one’s group mates promotes a sense of meaning, pride and esteem”.

#### **1.6.2.1.2. Cooperative Learning and Goal Theory**

Learners’ commitment to achieve their goals creates motivation which in itself creates the achievement of these goals. When using cooperative learning, all the members of the group have their own goals in addition to the group goals; and learners feel obliged to work hard on their goals till they accomplish them. According to Johnson and Johnson (2003), when students are working cooperatively, their goals are correlated and they are more likely to achieve mastery goals through enhancing understanding and learning. It is in cooperative

learning that learners perceive that their goals won't be achieved if and only if they work the rest of the members of the group.

### **1.6.2.2. Cooperative Learning and Humanistic Approach**

#### **1.6.2.2.1. Cooperative Learning Maslow's Needs Theory**

When cooperative groups are cohesive and well-structured, friendship and social relationships are formed; this will result in building security and safety in the learners (Brown, 2001). According to Maslow's hierarchical needs, these belong to the third level of needs that is so important in setting up motivation.

Belongingness and love needs are other needs that are achieved when working in cooperative groups. Finkbeiner (2004) argues that one of the most useful strategies to establish respect and belonging is to give students the chance to incorporate their unique knowledge using specific ways in the group work. In other words, cooperative learning gives learners the feeling that they have a respected place within the group and they are loved by the members of the group.

#### **1.6.2.2.2. Cooperative Learning and Self-Determination Theory**

Brophy (2004: 202) claims that "In classrooms that feature a positive interpersonal climate and norms of cooperation, students are likely to experience enhanced intrinsic motivation when they participate in learning activities that allow them to interact with their classmates".

That is to say, when learners interact with others, they show a self-motivation and engage easier in activities which allow them to exchange knowledge with others.

Johnson and Johnson (2003) believe also that cooperative learning is proved to make learners' want to be high achievers and make them believe that learning new ideas is important and enjoyable. As a result learners will build a high intrinsic motivation when working together.

Johnson and Smith (1998) also explain that cooperative learning is extrinsically motivating because of the importance of rewards that will be gained. Individual grades and group rewards serve as reinforcement for individuals to work cooperatively and effectively.

#### **1.6.2.2.3. Cooperative Learning and social Approach of Motivation**

Learning social skills is one of the granted outcomes of well- structured group work (Johnson, Johnson and Smith, 1998). Learners can learn easily what they practice; when they are working in cooperative learning, they learn how to respect others' different points of view, learn turn-taking, and learn how to express their view.

Johnson and Johnson (2003: 140) state that "motivation occurs within a network of interpersonal relationships". In addition to creating friendship relations that result from enhancing positive interdependence; teachers can make learners feel socially motivated to have set of connections of interpersonal relationships.

#### **Conclusion**

Cooperative learning has been adopted as a motivational fact that is used in almost all the academic subjects and with all students' levels. To some extent cooperative is related to collaborative, but their overlapping permits the use of both methods in the classroom. Also, cooperative learning is different from other classroom structures such as competitive learning where students' achievements and rewards are negatively interrelated; and from individualistic learning where students' achievement and rewards are not interrelated at all.

The well-structured cooperative learning may have different outcomes, learning strategies, social skills, achieving academic goals, and improving the affective side of learners which is mainly powered by motivation.

## **Chapter Two: Writing Skill**

### **Introduction**

Writing is the use of specific symbols to express and convey our thoughts, and feelings. It is considered as significant skill for several years and nowadays it is more important than ever. Although many people still don't know neither how to write nor how to read still we are relying on writing in any area. Recently it was noticed that our students are not writing at the pace that teachers expect them to do so, many researchers have investigated the main problems of those difficulties our students may encounter in the academic writing .Eventually it was revealed that the main reasons for that are: the lack of competition, lack of motivation, in other words its due to the traditional method of teaching writing. Student by working alone they are not enough motivated and they have not a kind of competition spirit so they are not paying much attention to their products. Hence great efforts have to be done by teachers in order to control the classroom and make their students more motivated. This chapter of this present research work will be devoted to give a brief definition of writing, as it will speak about the writing connection to other skills (with speaking and reading), other elements also will be introduced such as the components of writing, stages of development of writing, the role of writing skills in ESL/EFL, approaches to writing (product, process, genre, cooperative and creative approach) and finally it will deal with motivation and its relation to writing.

### **2.1 The Writing Skill**

#### **2.1.1 Defining Writing**

The term “writing” should be defined as a concept, as an act and as a skill. Writing as a general term is “not only putting one’s thoughts to paper as they occur, but actually using writing to create new knowledge” (Weigle, 2002: 32-33). It means that, writing is not only the reflection of one’s thoughts; it’s the actualisation (refreshing) of his/ her gained knowledge.

Brookes and Grundy (1998) define writing as a mean to communicate ideas, thoughts, and opinions in one's language. In other words,

One way to look at writing as an act is according to Hyland (2003: 3) to see it as “marks on a page or a screen, a coherent arrangement of words, clauses, and sentences, structured according to system or rules”. That is to say, writing is a coherent visual symbols that obey to certain rules. Writing as defined by Rivers (1968) is the act of putting in coherently and correctly graphic form what has been said. For Byrne (1988), writing involves the well structured arrangement of letters into words, and words into sentences that need to relate to each other to form a coherent whole. As for writing as a concept, Patel and Jain (2008: 125) “Writing is a kind of linguistic behaviour [...]. It presents the sounds of language through visual symbols”. This means that writing is the act of giving forms and shapes to sounds and speeches. Arapoff (1967: 233) describes writing as “much more than an orthographic symbolization of speech. It is most importantly, a purposeful selection and organization of experience, and it referred with “experience” to all thoughts, facts, opinions, or ideas. In other words, writing is only giving shapes to sounds; it's the good choice and organization of what one has as an established knowledge. Hughes (2005: 6) defines writing as follows:

Writing is a visual/motoric process which, although it is produced through the dimension of time (as all human actions are), has the inherent potential to persist through time, and for different sections to be revisited in the same form, but in a different order, as when we go back and re-read part of a paragraph or sentence when we do not understand.

Hughes means by this, that writing persists through time; a piece of writing can be revisited at any time and any chronological order. Gambrell (2007: 244) defines writing as being “a complex interaction of cognitive and physical factors. It involves the hand, eye, and both sides of the brain”. Writing requires form learners to construct and arrange meanings and ideas in a coherent way. When writing learners discover and explore their knowledge and gain and build a new one. They tend to build well

writings based on the conventions of grammar, spelling, punctuation and structure. (Gambrell, 2007).

Writing is giving ideas, thoughts and speeches a form and shape arranged in a way that obeys to the language's rules. Writing is a physical and mental activity; it involves the use of the mind, eyes and hands. It enables learners to use their gained knowledge and to construct a new one.

### **2.1.2 Writing in Connection to Other Skills**

Writing is an activity that can usefully be prepared for by work in other skills of speaking and reading. For that, Rivers (1968: 244) states that it is “Only by hearing and reading a great deal of the language as it is spoken and written by native speakers can the foreigner acquire that feeling for the appropriate use of language forms and combinations which is basic to expressive writing”.

#### **2.1.2.1 Speaking and Writing**

Although it may seem a banality to say it, speech and writing are different. According to Hughes (2005), writing is permanent, clearly delineated and readily available for inspection. In other words writing does not change through time and that it can be revisited at any time and in any chronological order, for instance starting by the last sentence of a paragraph, going to the first one and then going back to the last one again.

The following table 1 provides a summary of the differences between speaking and writing.

Features	Speaking	Writing
Physical Features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Speech is spoken sounds passing through the air.</li> <li>- Producing spoken sentence is a physical activity that implies the use of the muscles of the mouth and lungs.</li> <li>- Speaking involves two senses, hearing and speaking.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Writing is visible symbols on a paper or screen.</li> <li>- Producing a written sentence is a physical activity that implies the use of the hand, fingers using a pen or a keyboard.</li> <li>- Writing involves two sense, touch and sight.</li> </ul>
Linguistic Features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In speech, we are not much concerned with the explicitness in the expression. If needed a further explanation, repetition and expansion would be suitable according to the reactions and interjections of the listeners.</li> <li>- Speech has a higher tolerance for repletion of a phrase or sentence than writing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Written statements should be constructed more carefully, concisely and coherently. Writing must be explicit.</li> <li>- Repetition leads to redundancy.</li> </ul>
Cognitive Features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Speech develops naturally and early in the L1.</li> <li>- Acquisition of speech is an ego-building activity. When speaking learners build their personality and their knowledge through discovering their skills and capacities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Writing develops much more slowly in L1. Writing is learned via guidance and rules; it is not acquired at birth.</li> <li>- For many learners, learning to write is ego-destructive. When learning to write learners feel some frustrations and may stop Writing</li> </ul>

<p>Psychological Features</p>	<p>- It's the first aspect of language and occurs most of the time .It is a social act. It implies some form of interaction between individuals. Speech has a situational context.</p> <p>-Speech is linear. It cannot be retracted, but it can be amended. Speech cannot be changed or removed once said it stays. It is temporary and con not be revisited at any time (except for records).</p>	<p>-It's a solitary act since learners write alone. Writing lacks a situation context and therefore requires to be imaginative.</p> <p>-Writing is convergent. Writers assume the roles as readers. They presume that readers will share with them the same perceptions, views and expectations. It is permanent.</p>
<p>Social-cultural Features</p>	<p>- Speech may sometimes be in regional or other limited-context dialects. It means that speech may be used in academic and non academic situations and can be in different forms of language.</p> <p>- In some languages, Chinese for example, the various spoken dialects may even be mutually incomprehensible.</p>	<p>- Writing normally uses a general acceptable standard variety of language. It is more academic.</p> <p>- Written language is universally understood.</p>

**Table 1: Differences between Speech and Writing**

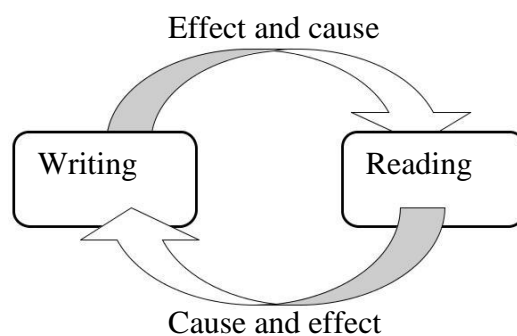
Speech and writing could be described as being fundamentally interactive one with another, since both are used by humans to communicate (Hughes, 2005). In other words, speech may show some characteristics of writing such as sermons and writing exhibits some features of speech such as in e-mails.



### 2.1.2.2 Reading and Writing

Reading and writing affect each other in two distinct directions; either reading stimulates writing “read-to-write” or writing initiates reading “write-to-read”. In the first direction which is reading influencing writing, Davison and Dawson (1998: 126) point that “The content of material we read can also be important in stimulating writing, and reading provides models for writing, by suggesting forms, conventions and structures which we can choose to adopt, modify or challenge”. This means that if learners are about to write about a given topic they will have to read some reading materials for additional ideas, information, and grammatical help.

The second direction which is about the influence of writing on reading, Davison and Dawson (1998: 127) argue that “writing contributing to the development of reading include writing in a particular genre to gain insights into the problems that constructing a particular kind of text presents, which may inform later critical analysis of similar texts”. In other words, some written materials are destined to be read and used to write other materials, for instance researchers write books, articles, encyclopaedias in order to be used by other to write their essays, dissertations, or books. Stosky (1983: 636) advances that, Better writers tend to be better readers (of their own writing as well as of other reading material), that better writers tend to read more than poorer writers, and that better readers tend to produce more systematically mature writing than poorer readers.



**Figure 1: Directions of Reading and Writing Interaction**

### **2.1.3 Components of Writing**

To be able to write, learners have to master the different elements constituting the writing skill in which only some are strictly linguistic. Raimes (1983) views that writing involves first of all content which has, for example, to be relevant, clear and logic. In addition to gathering ideas, learners need to organize these ideas in a coherent way. The third element of writing is the tools used to convey the message, including grammar, syntax and word choice. The three last components which are: the audience to whom the writing is addressed which requires having a model of the reader; then the purpose behind the writing which represents the goals of the writer (i.e. the message that the writer wants to convey to the reader) and at last the process followed by the writer, including turning ideas into written text (writing draft) reviewing what has been written and editing. Bell and Burnaby (1984) explains that:

Writing is an extremely complex cognitive activity in which the writer is required to demonstrate control of a number of variables simultaneously. At the sentence level, these include control of content, format, sentence structure, vocabulary, punctuation, spelling and letter formation. Beyond the sentence, the writer must be able to structure and integrate information into cohesive and coherent paragraphs and texts.

(as cited in Nunan, 1989: 36)

In other words, learners need to include these components in their writings for a full mastery of the writing skill.

### **2.2 Stages of Development of the Writing Skill**

Rivers (1968) argues that in order to learn how to express oneself comprehensively and clearly, learners need go through five stages of development: copying, reproduction, recombination and adaptation, guided writing, and composition. All five stages, according to Rivers overlap.

Copying is also called transcription; it refers to the copying of the already known knowledge such as grammatical rules, items of vocabulary, and syntax; whether for speech or reading. This stage is generally presented in the beginning of the writing program; especially

if learners come from a different writing system (i.e. for instance, the structure of the L1 and the SL/ FL is different). Copying allows learners to learn the conventions of the code, familiarizing them with the new script to be able to reorganize and copy down accurately and comprehensibly words and phrases. (Rivers, 1968)

At this stage of writing, teachers need to bear in mind some principles about copying if it is to be effective. Rivers (1968: 246) argues that:

The work set for copying should consist of sections of work already learned orally and read with the teacher. As the student is copying, he should repeat to himself what he is writing. In this way he deepens the impression in his mind of the sounds the symbols represent, and he has further repetition practice of basic dialogue or pattern sentences.

In order to have an effective copying, teachers need to ask their students to repeat what they learned from the reading or speech material in order to well memorize the learnt knowledge; then they can ask them to copy pieces and parts learned

The next stage is reproduction which refers to the production of copies without reference to the original one. Rivers (1968: 246) defines this stage as follows: “During reproduction the student will attempt to write, without originality, what he has learned orally and read in his textbook. Thus he will be able to do all the more successfully if he has been trained in habits of accuracy in the copying stage”.

In this stage learners are asked to reproduce what they did learn from orally or read, in order to check whether they have understood what has been taught and what has been copied. The perfect activity to be used at this stage to confirm the acquisition of certain rules and information is dedication. In this activity learners are appealed to bring back what they did learn and copy without referring to the original.

According to Rivers (1968) in the recombination and adaptation stage learners are asked to reproduce the learned work with a minor adaptation. Recombination does not imply the

change of structure and vocabulary at the same time. Rivers (1968: 249) emphasises that “at no point, however, will a student be required to make a recombination which involves a structural change and new vocabulary at the same time”. This means that, at no time learners will be asked to make some changes of two aspects of the original copy in order to make the recombination. At a certain time, learners are asked to make a recombination of some memorized oral materials, around a subject presented in a picture or series of pictures, already presented to learners (Rivers, 1968).

The fourth stage of development involves guided writing where learners are given some freedom in lexical and grammatical choices, but within a framework (Rivers, 1968). During the Guided writing stage, learners write under some instructions given by their teachers, and are given some freedom to select, according to their level, the lexical and structural patterns required for the writing exercises. At advanced courses, Rivers (1968: 251) suggests that “learners may summarize, or rewrite with a variation in person, tense, or number”.

This latter will prevent learners from trying to write at a level that exceeds their state of knowledge (Rivers, 1968). Learners can summarize a text, or paraphrase it. They are neither strictly controlled nor totally free. In like manner, Kroll (1990) states as examples of guided writing the production of a short text by answering direct and open-ended questions.

In the composition stage, learners must be well trained in the previous stages. Heaton (1975: 127) describes this activity as: “A task which involves the students in manipulating words in grammatically correct sentence and in linking those sentences to a piece of continuous writing which successfully communicates the writer’s thoughts and ideas on a certain topic”. In other words, composition demands that learners show their mastery of language forms, and their ability to construct a coherent whole that reflects their ideas on a particular subject based on a personal choice of lexical and structural items.

### **2.3 The Role of the Writing Skill in ESL/EFL Classrooms**

Up to the end of the 1960s, writing was neglected in the language learning field. Writing is among the most important skills that second language and foreign language students need to develop. The task of writing was tightly controlled to prevent errors caused by first language interference (Kroll, 2001). Including writing courses in language learning help students to get a good range of opportunities to learn the second language or the foreign language (I.S.P nation, 2009). The skill of writing plays a crucial role in facilitating the acquisition of communicative competence (Usó-Juan and Martínez-Flor, 2006). For Raimes (1983, 1987). Writing starts to be regarded as a major skill and an essential component in teaching curricula, typically for the following reasons:

- a) Writing is seen as an activity that may bring something new and different in the classroom; it also pushes learners to engage in some solitary activities.
- b) Writing reinforces what has been learned, i.e., practising grammatical rules and syntax.

It is seen as a proof of learners' mastery of the language.

- c) Writing allows learners to use the standard language in all its academic forms as it assesses knowledge of the language. The assessing of learners' mastery of rules and knowledge can be possible while they make exams.
- d) Writing is used as a reference. It is available as source for later reference and reading.
- e) Writing is a tool to uncover learners' weaknesses and needs. They may need to learn different types of writing that they may need for the future such as academic essays (dissertation and thesis), business letters, or reports.

In the context of ESL/EFL, learners are expected to learn:

- a. The use of the graphic system of the FL according to the rules of language.
- b. The use of the rules correctly and appropriately.

- c. The control of the structure of language and rules to convey ideas, thoughts and opinions comprehensively.
- d. The organization of the written work according to the learned rules and structures of the language in a coherent way.
- e. The selection of adequate and possible combinations of words and phrases which will convey the intended meaning.

## **2.4 Approaches to Writing**

A number of approaches have emerged to develop practice in writing skills. Applying one approach or another depends on what we want our learners to do: Whether we want them to focus more on the product of writing than its process, whether we want to encourage creative writing, either individually or cooperatively, and to whether we want them to use the computer as a useful writing tool.

### **2.4.1 The Product Approach**

This approach focuses on the result performed by learners, it is interested only in the writing itself. According to Nunan (1991: 86) "...a product oriented approach, as the title indicates focuses on the end result of the learning process, what is that the learner is expected to be able to do as a fluent and competent user of the language". In other words, the focuses are only on the final material learners produce

In the product approach learners are asked to only copy and reproduce what they have already been taught and teachers need to control this copying and reproduction to prevent errors caused by the L1 interference (Uso-Juan and Martinez-Flor, 2006 ). In such a context, a written text, as pointed out by Silva (1990: 13), was merely considered as "a collection of sentences patterns and vocabulary items – a linguistic artifact, a vehicle for language practice."

Flowers and Hays (1977) analyse thoroughly the Product Approach and noticed its three main aspects:

- Learners are exposed to the formal descriptive categories of rhetoric (modes of arguments, definition, cause and effect, etc. modes of discourse, description, persuasion, etc.)
- Learners are offered good examples (usually professional ones) and bad examples (usually their own)
- Learners are encouraged to absorb the features of socially approved style with emphasis on grammar and usage leaving the process of writing up to inspiration.

When focusing on the writing itself, it means that they focus first on the micro' level where they use words or sentences (spelling and punctuation), and second on the macro' level which focuses on the content and organization. In this case writing is considered as an end (Ur, 1991).

#### **2.4.2 The Process Approach**

By the late 1960s attention began to shift away from attention to product toward the actual process of writing, that is, towards ways in which text could be developed. This approach represents a shift from the final product to the different stages the writer goes through in order to create this product. According to Zamel (1982: 196-9) “ writing involves much more than studying a particular grammar, analyzing and imitating rhetorical models, or outlining what it is one plans to say”.

The purpose of this approach is to discover what writers do when they write and for that a number of researches have emerged. The most exhaustive is White and Arndt's (1991), including six steps: generating ideas, focusing on, structuring, drafting, evaluating and reviewing. These stages generally involve different forms of brainstorming, selection and ordering ideas, planning, drafting, redrafting and revising.

In addition, Flower and Hayes (1981) propose a cognitive model of recursive writing consisting of three major elements:

- 1) The planning stage, in turn subdivided into smaller processes such as generating ideas, organizing these ideas and setting the goals for writing.
- 2) The translating stage, in which writers articulate and write down their thoughts generated in the first stage.
- 3) The reviewing stage, in which writers evaluate and revise the text.

This approach highlights personal writing, the writer's creativity, and fluency (Reid, 2001). In other words, learners are taught to become active writers, that is to say, to generate thoughts or ideas and move actively and dynamically throughout their composing processes, that is, from the generation of ideas through to the editing of the final text. In such a context, writing is viewed as a complex, recursive and creative process which is essentially learned, not taught (Uso-Juan and Martinez-Flor, 2006). Flower and Hayes (1977 as cited in Spack, 1984) show that writing is a form of problem solving which needs to communicate intention and ideas to others.

### **2.4.3 Comparison between Process and Product**

In the nineties, we witnessed a wide variety of writing research applying and criticizing both the product and process traditions such as Silva (1990), Leki (1995), and Raimes (1991). They state that none of the two approaches is considered as the appropriate approach to writing. Their criticism is based on the fact that each approach tends to emphasize a specific aspect, thus, neglecting the interaction between the four elements in the writing: writer, reader, text, and context.



The Process Approach	The Product Approach
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-emphasis on learning process.</li> <li>-focus on student experience.</li> <li>-regard for form and structure.</li> <li>-priority on student interactions</li> <li>-concern for immediate tasks, activities, brainstorming, genre analysis.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-emphasis on finished products.</li> <li>-focus on objective outcomes.</li> <li>-regard for global meaning.</li> <li>-priority on formal course design.</li> <li>-concern for long-term objectives.</li> <li>-classroom writing, error analysis and stylistic focus are features of a product writing approach.</li> </ul>

**Table 2: Major Dichotomies in Writing Approaches**

(Adapted from Newfields, 1999)

Also, Soles (2003) maintains that since no method of teaching works well for all students and compositions, teachers need a variety of pedagogical strategies.

#### **2.4.4 The Genre Approach**

The Genre Approach to teaching writing attempts to get learners aware of the different elements of writing: the topic, conventions, style of the genre and the context in which their writing will be read and by whom. “In a genre approach to writing learners study texts in the genre they are going to be writing before they embark on their own writing” (Harmer, 2001: 258). This means that learners need to have sufficient knowledge about the writing genre and then start practicing on it. For instance, if learners are asked to write a newspaper article, they normally have to study its components, the structure, and language items and then use these collected information and write the article.

At the beginning learners are asked to imitate a given writing genre so they can master it (it is a form of reproduction) and after the mastery of how to write such a genre they are free to write it without referring to the original (Harmer, 2001).

Silva (1990: 13-14) explains that writing seen by this approach was to be concerned with the fact that learners need to learn the logical construction and arrangement of discourse forms and to learn the modes of development of the writing paragraphs and essays such as illustration, exemplification, cause and effect, comparison and so on.

#### **2.4.5 The Creative Approach**

For creative writing or summarizing, teachers could give a sentence starter (for e.g. If there were no plants on the earth... / A man met an alien on the seashore...) then all students in each team have to finish the sentence. Then, they pass the paper to the right, read the one they receive, and add a sentence to that one. After a few rounds, four great summaries or stories emerge. Students should be given time to add a conclusion and/or edit their favourite one to share with the class (Mandal, 2009).

Creative writing allows learners to write starting from their own experience. Engaging in assignments such as writing poetry, stories and plays provide a strong motivation to learners. It is a journey of self-discovery, and self-discovery promotes learning. (Gaffield-Vile, 1998).

#### **2.4.6 The Cooperative Approach**

Writing can be a personal process done solely for oneself or a social process done for and with others (Gambrell et al., 2007). Social interaction around a shared experience is the foundation of the language experience approach. When students talk about an experience and that talk is transcribed, they can then read the written story or report. Young children learn how to write and how to read as a result of the social interaction that is part of the language experience approach (Gambrell et al., 2007). One of the methods recommended in teaching writing is the incorporation of cooperative learning (Kagan, 2002).

In cooperative learning method when the teacher gives a writing task, the members of the groups work together towards certain shared learning goals. They help each other during the process of drafting the writing. They plan, translate and review the work together. They

monitor and evaluate their writing. They try to gain appreciation for their group (Mandal, 2009). When writing in cooperative work, learners may find themselves writing about topics that they might not have written about if they were working on their own, or using language items that they might not have used when working individually.

Harmer (2006) believes that writing in groups is effective in genre-based and process approaches. Students find the activity motivating in terms of the writing itself. They also find the activity to be motivating when they embark on the research, discussed on the topics, had peer evaluation and achieved the group's goal. Legenhausen and Wolff (1990) concur that writing in small groups is an efficient way to promote writing abilities and it was an excellent interaction activity.

Mariam and Napisah (2005) postulate that when peer interaction was incorporated in learning writing, the students generated ideas and constructed sentences together. Thus this will lead to a better understanding of the topic that they are required to write on. The students will also be able to write concrete, accurate and creative piece of writing (Mariam & Napisah 2005).

## **2.5 Motivation in writing**

According to Suzanne Hidi & Pietro Boscolo (2006) the psychological conceptualization of motivation to write has developed just in the recent years and kept on changing under the impact of the different motivational theories and theoretical views of writing. They state also that the significant development of motivational research during the 1980s had an impact on writing research only toward the end of the decade. When interest researchers on the one hand, and self-efficacy researchers on the other, showed that writing is a complex activity involving not only cognitive and metacognitive processes but also affective components. They identify also that the most early cognitive model of writing processes (Hayers & Flower, 1980) include motivation only as an element of the writing task environment .

Shui-Fong Lam & Yin-Kum Law (2007) state also that writing is an activity that is much emotional as cognitive. For McDonlad (1987) emotional factors influence all the stages of the writing process. Thus for Shui -Fong Lam & Yin-Kum Law(2007) a strong need existed for researchers and educators to explore the affective factors that contribute to the students' writing performance. Once again Shui-Fong Lam & Yin-Kum Law (2007) note that motivation with its noticeable influence is among the important affective factors. Buning & Horn (2000) argue as well that writing successfully is a complex and effortful activity that requires systematic attention to motivational conditions.

### **Conclusion**

Writing has been studied from different approaches, the productive approach which insists on the writing itself (the result), the process approach which focuses on the stages taken by writers when writing, genre approach in which learners need to be familiar with a given genre so they can start to reproduce it, then the creative approach which encourage writers to use their creativity and own words (learners are pushed to be active learners ), and final cooperative approach which is the subject of our study, it emphasizes on the fact that when learners interact and work cooperatively they produce better writing. This achievement in writing is done due to the cooperative work that can be strengthened by the motivation which has become the effective component of any successful learning.

## **Chapter Three: Investigation in Cooperative Learning Strategy's Effects on Students**

### **Writing Level**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter deals with the practical study as it explains the method and procedures used in the research, in addition to the analysis of the data collected in order to answer the research's questions and to confirm or reject the hypothesis. It starts with a description of the population of the study, the means of research and their implementation. This will be followed by the analysis of the data collected and a discussion of the results will be presented. At the end, some pedagogical recommendations which are represent outcomes of the undertaken research study will be mentioned.

#### **3.1. Population of the Study (Participants)**

The entire population of the study consists of third year students of English as a foreign language at the Department of English at Dr Moulay Tahar University Saida during the academic year 2015-2016 and 3<sup>rd</sup> year written expression teachers at the same department. The sample which is dealt with for the present study is of 30 students, from a total population of about 80 students belonging to the Applied Linguistics option (37%); and the teachers' population is of 09 teachers teaching third year students of English at the department .

This population has been chosen for two reasons. First reason is that 3<sup>rd</sup> year students have been studying the written expression module for three years, thus, they would have mastered the writing process and would probably produce coherent pieces of writing. The second reason behind the choice of this particular population is that they would have experienced working in groups at least once during the preceding years (even in other subjects) and therefore they would have an opinion and attitude toward it as it would have

some effects on them.

### **3.2. Research Tools**

For the present piece of research, two main tools of research have been used: a questionnaire for written expression's teacher and an in-class writing test for 3<sup>rd</sup> year students.

#### **3.2.1. Description and Administration of the Questionnaire**

The questionnaire was handed to 09 written expression teachers of the third year in the department of English at the University Dr Moulay Tahar Saida. The questionnaire is mainly applied to see how teachers perceive the importance of teaching and learning written expression using the cooperative learning strategy to motivate their students to write better compositions. The questionnaire is composed of 21 question items which can be divided into three main parts. First part, (Q1) through (Q6), is concerned with personal information about teachers. The second part, (Q7) through (Q16), is concerned with the teachers' evaluation of the students' writing level, the students' motivation to write and the approach followed when teaching writing and students' weaknesses and mistakes as seen by teachers. In the last part, (Q17) through (Q21), includes the teachers attitude vis-à-vis the use of the cooperative learning strategy while teaching writing to third year students, their purposes behind the use of cooperative learning, in addition to other issues raised in the theoretical part.

#### **3.2.2. Description and Administration of the In-Class Writing Test**

At the very beginning, students were chosen to be taught to write compositions under the traditional method which is the individual learning strategy. In other words there was no interaction between students, they were not allowed to communicate each one was supposed to write an individual paper on his/her own. Then they were asked to write an essay individually on the following topic: should we include science in the humanities.

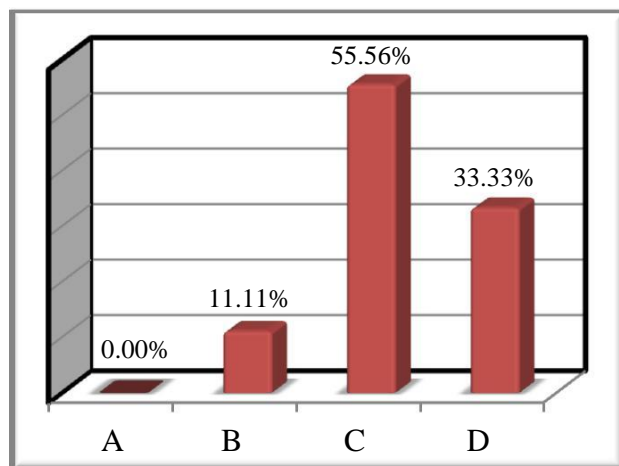
They were asked again to write a composition but this time with their group mates about this topic: should we take decisions alone. Eventually the two compositions written under the two approaches stood as the in-class test for the present research they were compared and analysed.

### 3.3. Data analysis

#### 3.3.1 The Teachers' Questionnaire Results

##### Question item one

This question asks about the teachers' degrees. All these teachers were teaching in the department of English University Dr Moulay Tahar Saida.

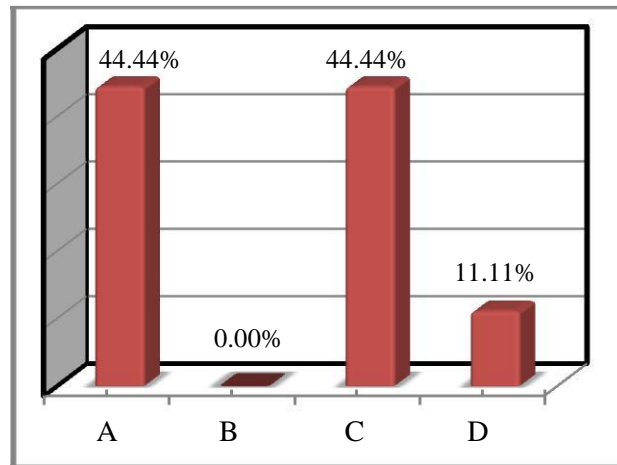


**Figure 2: Teachers' Degrees**

Among the 09 teachers there was no teacher who held a License degree (option A) (0.00%), 01 teacher held a Master degree (option B) (11.11%), 05 teachers held a Magister (option C) (55.56%), and the 03 remaining teachers of the sample held a Doctorate (option D) (33.33%). The thing that can be concluded from that question is that there is a kind of heterogeneity which implies that different answers were found in the next questions.

### Question Item Two:

In this question, teachers are asked to provide us with their work experience as teachers in the department of English University Dr Moulay Tahar Saida.



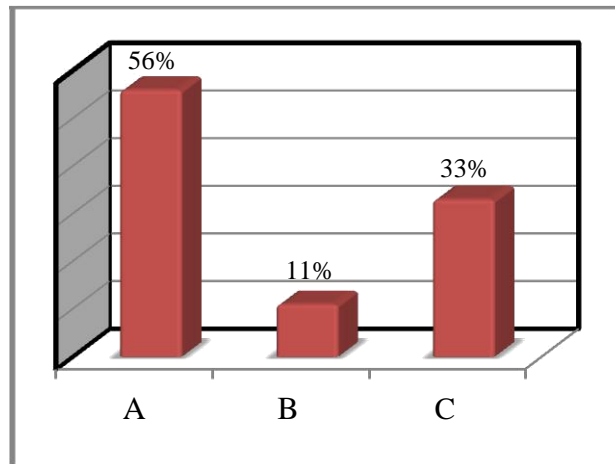
**Figure 3: Teachers' Working Experience**

The results show that, 04 teachers (44.44%) had a work experience in the department of English at the University Dr Moulay Tahar Saida between 01 up to 10 years (option A), 04 teachers (44.44%) worked from 21 up to 30 years (option C) at the same department. The 01 remaining teachers (11.11%) worked in the department of English for more than 30 years (option D). Again results show that the sample was composed of three different periods of experience, therefore getting different points of view and opinions in what followed.

### Question Item Three

This question is concerned with the teachers' experience in teaching written expression. The graph below shows the percentage of teachers' experience in teaching writing.



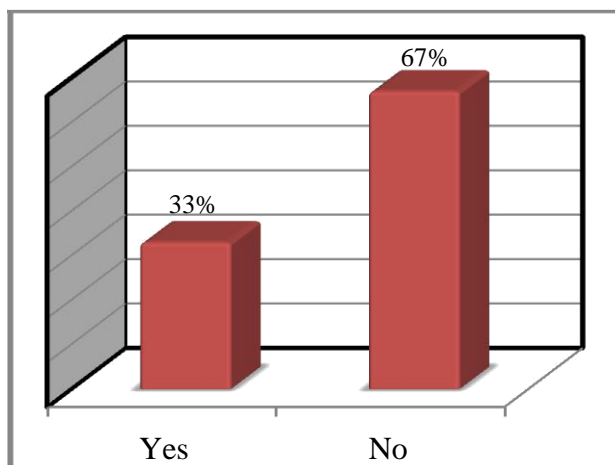


**Figure 4: Teachers' Experience in Teaching Written Expression**

The results show that five teachers (56%) which was the majority of teachers, taught written expression module from 01 up to 10 years (option A) in the department of English University of Dr Moulay Tahar-saida-, 01 teacher (11%) taught from 11 up to 20 years (option B) at the same department. The 03 remaining teachers (33%) taught writing from 21 years up to 30 years (option C). This difference in teaching writing experience means that teachers with a long experience in teaching writing might have already gained some techniques and strategies for teaching writing than those who had started teaching recently.

#### **Question item Four**

The purpose of this question is to see if the sample of teachers chosen had any training courses before starting teaching. In other words, were they exposed to some courses about what strategy to use in teaching writing and which aspects of writing that a teacher focused on?

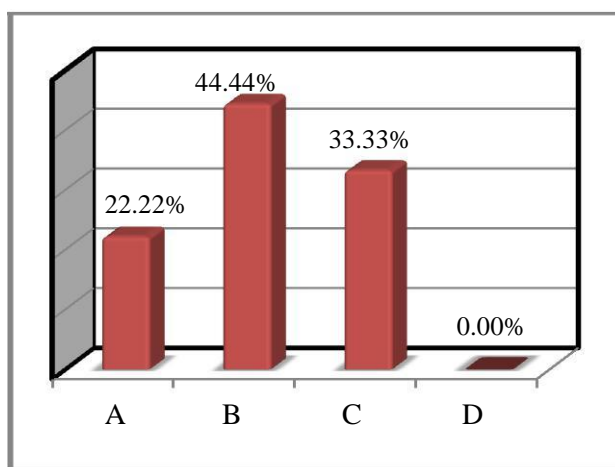


**Figure 5: Teachers' Training Courses Prior to Teach**

The things that can be deduced from the results shown in Figure 5 are that 04 teachers (33%) benefited from training courses prior starting which may influence positively their teaching methods. And for the 06 teachers (67%) who responded that they didn't benefit from any training courses might have the same methods as those who had received a training as they might have different ones. This training is another factor that might have influenced the responses of teachers and also their ways of teaching.

**Question Item Five**

This question is concerned with teachers' perception of their students' evaluation of the importance of writing as a subject for the mastery of a foreign language.

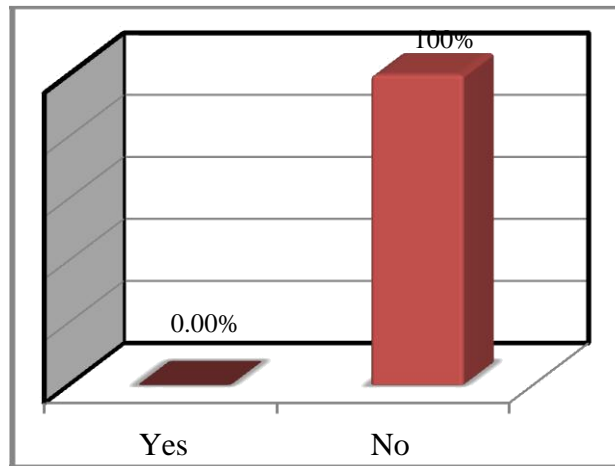


**Figure 6: Teachers' Opinion about the Importance of Writing for Students**

Figure 6 represents the percentage of teachers' responses; how their students valued the importance of writing when learning a foreign language. 02 teachers (22.22%) thought that students see that learning writing in learning a foreign language is very much important (option A) for them; they considered it as an important key subject to master the language. 04 other teachers (44.44%) thought that their students writing as a much important (option B) subject in learning a foreign language; this may mean that some students see writing as just a part of the learning process of a foreign language; they perceive it as a learning step they may need for the good learning of that language. The 03 remaining teachers (33.33%) responded that students consider that writing is of little importance (option C); this means that some students may learn a foreign language with little or no exposure to writing; they may see it as just a subject to pass through in order to succeed. At last, none of the teachers thought that students' perceive writing of no importance (option D), this may mean that even though students do not perceive writing as an important aspect of the learning of a foreign language they may see its importance in helping them to succeed or to be good at other subjects which need a mastery of writing.

### **Question Item Six**

Question number 06 investigates teachers' satisfaction about students' level of writing. In other words do students produce good pieces of writing or do they write as they are expected to do?

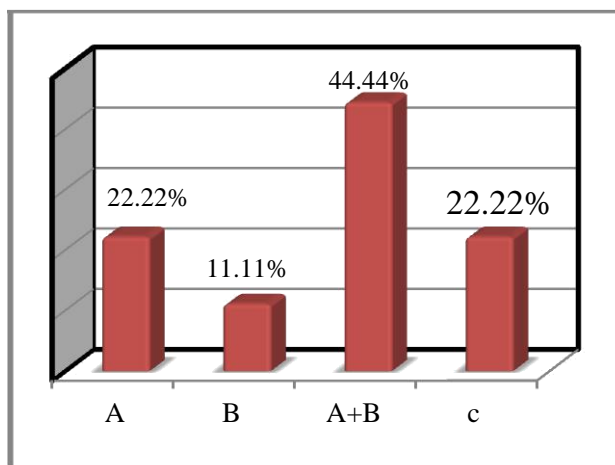


**Figure 7: Teachers' Satisfaction of Students' level of Writing**

Teachers answered this question about whether they were satisfied with the level of writing shown by their students. All the 09 teachers (100%) answered that students' level of writing was not satisfactory at all. This means that students are not writing as they are supposed and expected to do; they do not have enough knowledge about how to write or they may not be motivated to write. Students' low level of writing is due to several factors that may differ from one student to another. This statistics highlight as well the hard task required from teachers and their students in order to upgrade the level of writing.

### **Question Item Seven**

This question aims at determining which approach the 09 teachers followed in teaching writing. Whether it is the product approach, which seeks only for the final piece students produce i.e. writing as an end. Or the process approach which focuses on the steps followed by students when writing i.e. writing as a means or any other approaches. Teachers are also asked to justify their choice for such or such an approach.



**Figure 8: Teachers' Choice of the Approach to Follow in Teaching Writing**

After analyzing teachers' answers, some teachers chose the process and product approach which means that they might use both approaches at the same time or they might mix between them. 01 teacher (11.11%) chose the product approach (option B). This may mean that this teacher focused only on the written language students produce; i.e. what students use as language tools and items, grammar rules and sentence structures. Two teachers (22.22%) chose the process approach (option A) which focuses on the stages and steps students pass through while writing; how they generated ideas, organised them, write the first draft by choosing the right language items and rules and review it and then rewrite another draft. They justified their choice for the process approach by saying that:

- The process approach helps students become aware of the importance of each stage of writing and allows them to develop their product by working on their own mistakes.
- The process approach to teaching writing helps the students follow necessary steps for a better product.

Among teachers' sample, 04 of them (44.44%) chose both product and process approach (option A+B). This means that they gave importance to the steps students go through when writing compositions without neglecting the final material students get after following writing Steps. Teachers emphasised on writing as a means and as an end. The choice of these two approaches is justified as follow:

- There are aspects of writing which require to be taught through the product and others require the process approach.

- Students need to know about the process (steps) and the product (final result).
- Process and Product approaches are the basic ones.
- It is necessary to use process and product approaches.

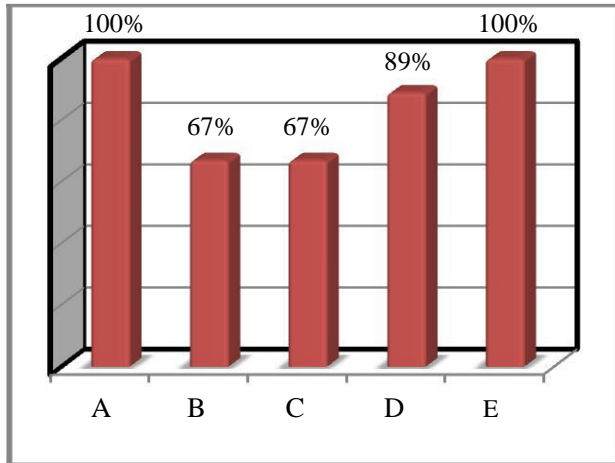
The 02 remaining teachers (22.22%) chose another approach which is Eclectic approach (option C) which according to Rivers (1981) combines the techniques of several different approaches. For example, many courses have elements from the process approach, the product approach, the genre approach, the cooperative approach, and so on. According to Raimes (1983) teachers should adapt their teaching methods according to their students' needs as their skills develop and for that they should use the eclectic approach. The 02 teachers chose the eclectic approach for the following reasons:

- An eclectic approach that cares for the students' needs and interests.
- Whatever the method of teaching writing that you adopt you should consider your students' writing abilities and competences to support their learning of the writing skill.
- Writing is not only a product.

Teachers had different approaches in teaching writing, some were focusing on writing as a product, others as a process, and some others were making mixtures between the two or were combining the most known approaches to please and satisfy their students' needs.

### Question Item Eight

This question was raised to know teachers' opinion about the common problems and difficulties students face when writing.



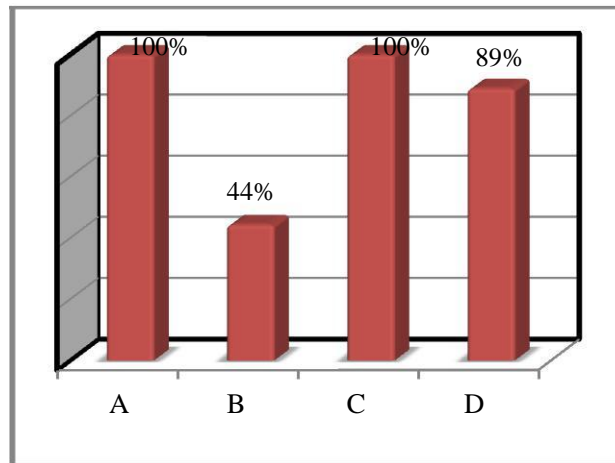
**Figure 9: Teachers' Opinion about Students' Weaknesses**

From Figure 9, 09 teachers (100%) responded that students show grammar weaknesses (option A) when writing. This means they show low mastery of the grammatical rules. Concerning content and ideas problems, 06 teachers (67%) answered that students lack of supporting ideas in their writings and tend to have poor content (option B). According to 06 teachers (67%), students are also weak when it comes to organization (option C) whether organizing their ideas or organizing the steps they pass through to write a composition; they are not organized therefore they do not follow the writing steps one by one (brainstorming, planning, free writing,...etc). 08 teachers (89%) answered that students' L1 tend to interfere (option D) in their writing; students may borrow expression, ideas, and even L1 culture. Students show a lack of vocabulary; 09 teachers (100%) answered that students do not have enough vocabulary (option E) to express their ideas adequately.

As it was noticed the results are more or less close to each other, this may imply that students suffer almost from all the problems and this may be due the method of teaching in addition to the lack of motivation among students.

### Question Item Nine

This question aims at knowing the writing aspect that students needed to be taught and on which aspects of writing teachers focused when teaching writing.



**Figure 10: Teachers' Focus on Aspects of Writing**

The results show that 09 teachers (100%) focused on grammar (option A) when teaching writing; which means that students had to know good grammar to produce better compositions. For 04 teachers (44%) vocabulary (option B) was also a key element for good writing and they paid attention to that students gain vocabulary as much as possible, so they can express their ideas using the appropriate words. Content (option C) was also considered by 09 teachers (100%) to be an important aspect to focus on when teaching writing; students must know how to choose ideas that suit the most the topics they are writing on, they need to know how to write coherent and cohesive ideas. The last aspect that 08 teachers (89%) focused on when teaching writing is mechanics (option D); which means that students need to learn how to write well-structured sentences, when to use punctuation and how to link sentences to get a coherent composition.



## Question Item Ten

The 09 Teachers are asked to give some reasons that are behind students' failure to write good compositions. The sample of teachers justified students' low level of writing by the following:

- Students seem to have problem to master the style, a lack of vocabulary, L1 interference, and lack of background knowledge about the language learned.
- This is quite individual; students have different weaknesses and strengths. However, students' main weaknesses are at the level of language (grammar, spelling, punctuation).
- Students lack practice and reading.
- Students are not readers: there are things that we learn through reading frequently and observing (e.g. text structure, conventions of different genres, vocabulary).
- Students have little opportunities for practice (groups of more than 50 students + other modules do not require writing essays (most of them)).
- Students do not practice writing on a daily basis.
- Students are affected with the limited time allotted to teaching writing.
- Students find writing as a skill difficult. Plus, they are not motivated to write. These lead, in fact to poor writing.
- Students are not motivated in learning how to write in English at least in an acceptable way.
- Students are poor readers, they read poorly.

From the above statements which explain students' weaknesses in writing, it can be deduced that the majority of teachers agreed on three main causes of students weaknesses at the level of writing: the students are not readers, they are not provided with enough chances and opportunities to practice writing, besides they lack motivation to generate good pieces of

writing. Also students' weaknesses are different from one another and teachers cannot deal with students' weaknesses one by one. Students have to be aware of their weaknesses and deal with them to facilitate the teaching process for teachers.

### **Question Item Eleven**

The purpose of the question is to know the appropriate steps to take in order to improve students' level of writing. Students need to follow the following advice in order to be good writers. The 09 teachers answered that the students' level can be ameliorated through:

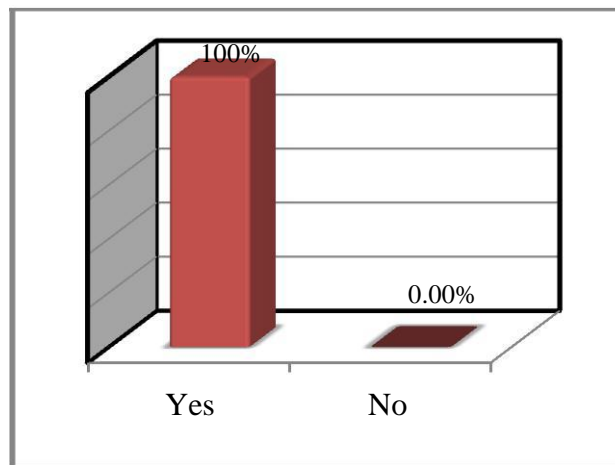
- Teachers should give time to practice and have less crowded groups
- Teachers should encourage reading, competition, and rewards (e.g. give additional marks, post the best paper in the department or give it as an example essay to students).
- Teachers should combine writing sessions with those of reading.
- Teachers should ask students to practice in addition to giving them feedback.
- Teachers should ask students to read intensively and practice writing too.
- Teachers should ask students to practice reading regularly in English at home.
- Teachers should allocate enough time for students to practice.
- Teachers should constantly expose students to the English language.
- Teachers should ask students to use the dictionary.

Some teachers suggested that students have to read to improve their writing because thanks to reading they can learn new sentence structures, grammar rules, new vocabulary and new ideas. Some others said that practicing is an important thing to do in order to be a good writer; students have to write as much as possible. Others mentioned that motivation (rewards, word praise, extra marks ...) can boost students' willingness to write. In addition to the use of dictionary which is a good and reliable source to gain new vocabulary. Again each student differs from the others and for that each one has to follow the technique which she/he

feels that will improve her/his writing level.

### Question Item Twelve

This question aims at knowing whether the 09 teachers motivate their students to write either directly or indirectly.



**Figure 11: Teachers' Motivation to Student to Write**

All the 09 teachers (100%) responded by yes to this question. This may mean that these teachers tried to boost students' motivation to write by any methods that may be appropriate for their needs. They also adopted their teaching to students' needs and changed them whenever they feel an improvement in their students' level.

### Question Item Thirteen

Teachers are asked to propose some methods or activities they use or would use to foster students' motivation to write. The 09 teachers answered by saying:

- To ask learners to prepare productions at home and have a working session to correct everything.
- To ask learners to work in groups and feel free to interact to have peer-correction and comments on each other's writings.
- To give learners homework, rewards, praising... etc.
- To ask learners to work in collaboration.

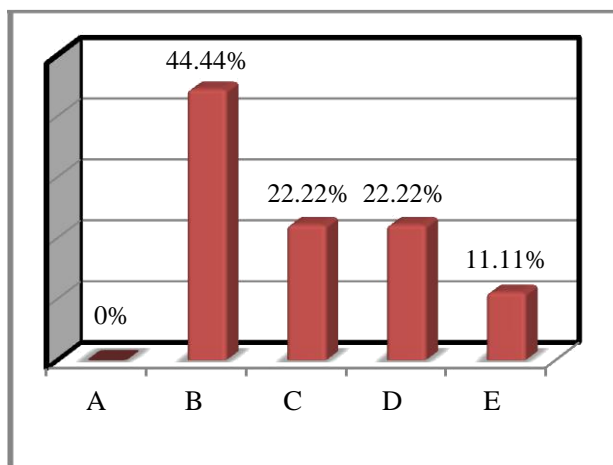
- To praise learners, to give them positive comments, to read the best paper (or extracts from best papers) to classmates, and to work on the best paper in class to improve it and give it as a model essay with the name of the student writer on it.
- To ask learners to choose topics that interest them, they are likely to like composing.
- To ask learners to choose topics, to work in groups and to evaluate each other's works.
- To ask learners to work in collaboration.
- To ask learners to read short stories because it is a good method.
- To make learners write as much as possible.
- To advise the learners to read, but it cannot be guaranteed they do.

Methods to foster students' motivation to write differ from one teacher to another. Each teacher adopted the methods that s/he thought might boost students' motivation to write.

Some teachers tended to ask students to write compositions at home where they feel themselves more comfortable. Some others preferred to ask students to write on topics that please them the most, and feel themselves free with. Other teachers asked students to work in groups, i.e., using cooperative work in writing because students accept criticisms and comments coming from their group mates than those coming from the teacher, where they try to prove to each other they have good ideas, in addition to giving them rewards whenever the group produces good composition. Some other teachers advised students to read a lot but they cannot guarantee that they do, and for that students must know that they need reading.

#### **Question Item Fourteen**

The question aims at asking teachers for their opinions about students' level of self-motivation; to what extent they are intrinsically motivated without any intervention of the teacher.

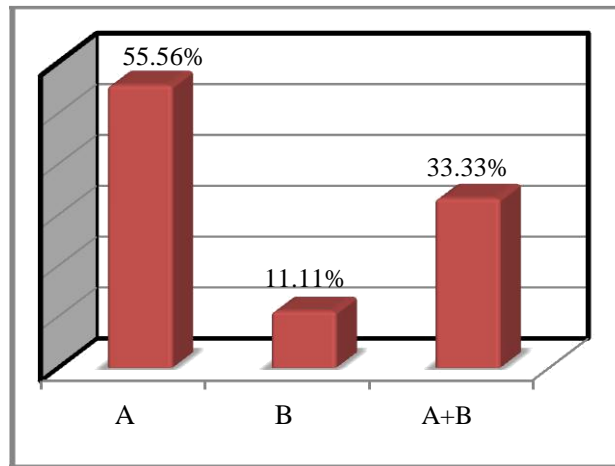


**Figure 12: Teachers' Perception of Students' Self-Motivation**

None of the 09 teachers considered students as very self-motivated (option A) to write; which means that students are not intrinsically motivated to write they need something or someone to motivate them. 04 teachers (44.44%) perceived their students as motivated (option B)to write; that may mean that students are motivated to write in order to master the language. 02 teachers (22.22%) who considered their students as moderately motivated (option C) and an equal number of teachers (22.22%) evaluated students to have little motivation (option D) to write. The remaining teacher (11.11%) thought that students are unmotivated (option E) to write. Students who are not self-motivated may need an extrinsic motivation, i.e., motivation coming from the environment (teachers, classmates, parents ...etc).

### **Question Item Fifteen**

This question aims at knowing which strategy the 09 teachers of the sample followed in teaching writing whether cooperative learning strategy or individual learning strategy.



**Figure 13: Teachers' Strategy in Teaching Writing**

The results show that 05 teachers (55.56%) followed the cooperative learning strategy (option A) in teaching writing; they put students in groups and ask them to produce one piece of writing which is normally the result of the entire group's members' effort. One of the teachers (11.11%) chose the individual learning strategy (option B) which implies that every student writes his/her own composition individually without any interaction between them. 03 teacher (33.33%) followed both the cooperative and individual learning strategy (option A+B). This means that these teachers may want to compare students' level when working individually and when working cooperatively. The results show that the cooperative learning strategy is more used than the individual learning strategy.

### **Question Item Sixteen**

This question aims at having some advice from the 09 teachers of the sample to those who are about to use the cooperative learning strategy in their teaching. The following are the advice given by the 09 teachers:

- Teachers are appealed to Use it! Teaching must be learner-centred! Students must learn to be (become) responsible of their learning.
- Teachers should know that students' responses to the cooperative learning strategy

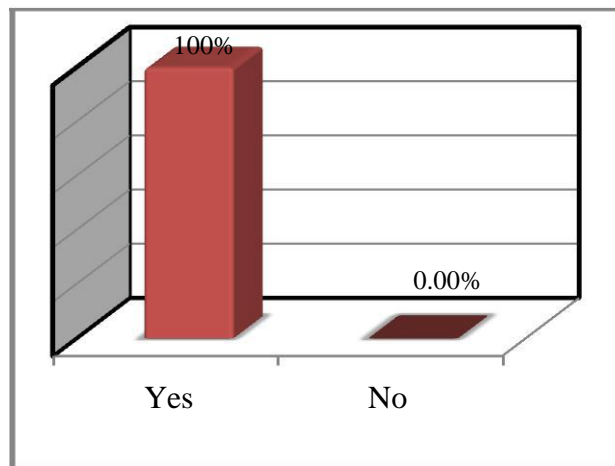
Will vary.

- Teachers should take into consideration: students' level, the learning situation, and students' preferences (in learning to write).
- Teachers should pay attention to the division of the group in order to enable the writers to exchange and learn from each other.

From the above advice it can be seen that the cooperative learning strategy allows students to be active, responsible and have some importance during classes. When using the cooperative learning strategy, teachers have to pay attention to students' need and abilities. Students have to be the key element in a cooperative classroom.

### Question Item Seventeen

Teachers are asked to give their opinions about students' motivation to write when applying the cooperative learning strategy. The question aims at knowing if students are more motivated to write when using the cooperative strategy than when working individually.

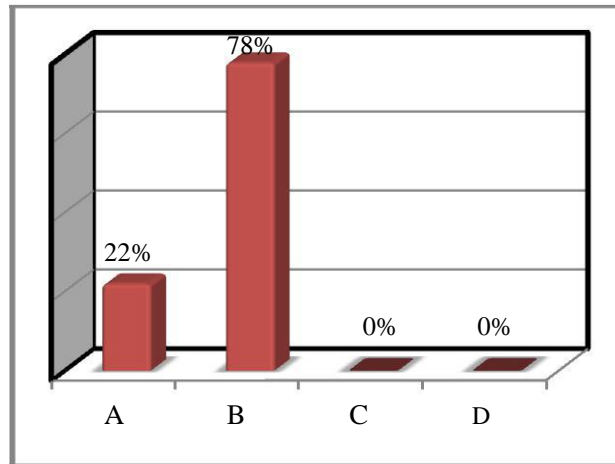


**Figure 14: Teachers' Opinion about Students' Motivation to Write under the Cooperative Strategy**

All the 09 teachers (100%) responded by yes; that students are motivated when working under the cooperative learning strategy. This means that the interaction among group members boosts their motivation to write and they tend to produce good compositions.

### Question Item Eighteen

The purpose of this question is to know to which extent teachers thought that students are motivated.



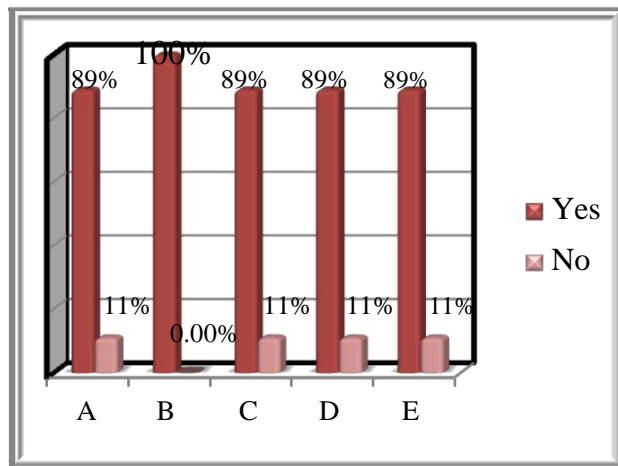
**Figure 15: Teachers' Perception of Students' level of Motivation to Write under the Cooperative Strategy**

Figure 15 shows that 02 teachers (22.22%) thought that students are strongly motivated (option A) to write under the cooperative learning strategy. This means that the cooperative strategy is a key factor to foster students' motivation to write. The remaining 07 teachers (77.78%) thought that students are motivated (option B) when learning in a cooperative classroom where they can exchange ideas with others and they can correct each other. None of the teachers felt that students are less motivated (option C) or not motivated at all (option D) to write under the cooperative strategy. That confirms a part of the hypothesis we stated; that the cooperative learning strategy is a motivational factor in writing.

### Question Item Nineteen

The question aims at knowing which of these skills teachers tried to achieve by using the cooperative learning strategy.



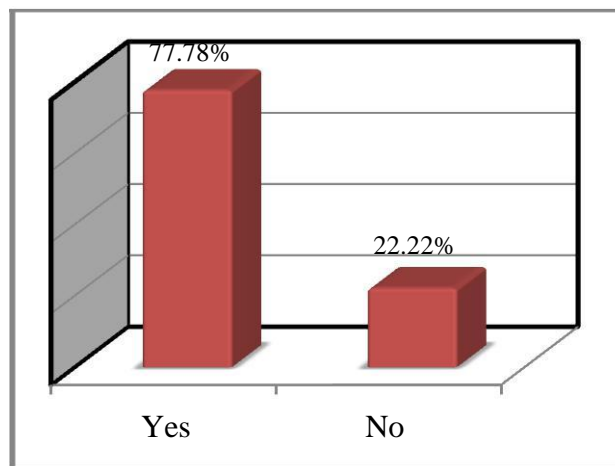


**Figure 16: Teachers' Goals when Applying the Cooperative Strategy**

The results show that, 08 teachers (89%) said yes; that they applied the cooperative learning strategy to push their students to criticise ideas and not people (option A) .Only 01 teacher (11%) did not aim at achieving this skill (option A) when using the cooperative strategy. For the second skill to achieve which is encouraging everyone to participate (option B), the 09 teachers (100%) answered by yes. This means that they aimed at making all students active learners. When using the cooperative learning strategy 08 teachers (89%) aimed at making students listening to others' ideas although not agreeing with them (option C).Only 01 teacher (11%) did not choose this skill (option C) to be achieved by students. Another skill that 08 teachers (89%) wanted their students to achieve is building positive relationships among group members (option D); again only 01 teacher (11%) did not want to achieve this skill (option D). Also 08 teachers (89%) aimed at making their students argue their ideas to persuade others (option E), and just 01 teacher (11%) who did not want students to gain this skill (option E). From the above results it can be seen that cooperative learning is used to motivate learners to be active learners and allow them to interact with each other and exchange ideas .It permits them also to build relationships with the rest of the group members. None of the 09 teachers mentioned other skills to be achieved when using the cooperative learning strategy than those mentioned in the literature review.

## Question Item Twenty

Teachers are asked whether they interfered in the organization of the group or they let students act on their own. Does the cooperative learning strategy setting need the interference of teachers in grouping students?

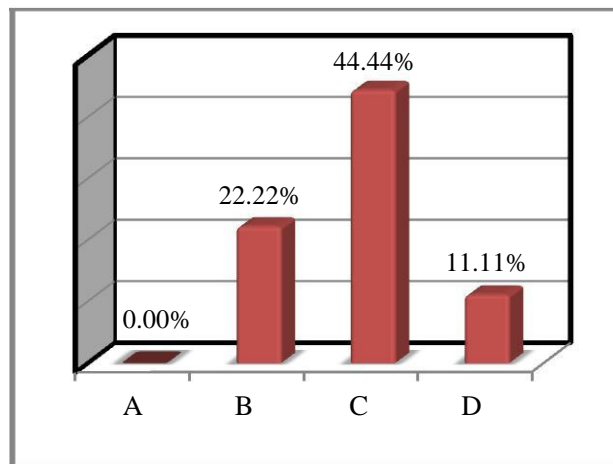


**Figure 17: Teachers' Interference in Groups' Organization**

Figure 17 shows that 02 teachers (22.22%) did not interfere in the organization of the cooperative groups. This means that students are left on their own to choose with whom they would work. This is what confirms that teachers aim at letting students build relationships with each other and choose their pairs in work i.e. students are the only ones responsible for the group organization. The 07 teachers (77.78%) interfered in the organization of the small groups. Teachers tried to arrange small groups in a way that provide equilibrium and heterogeneity among groups' members. Teachers' organization might differ from one teacher to another and the next question provided the research with some basis relayed on to arrange small groups.

### Question Item Twenty one

This question aims at explaining the cause behind the intervention of the 07 teachers (77.78%) and knowing on which basis these teachers arranged small groups when using the cooperative learning strategy.



**Figure 18: Basis Teachers Follow to Organize Groups of Students**

The results show that 02 teachers (22.22%) chose to arrange students depending on their proficiency (option B), this means that students in the same group should have different levels of proficiency for a balanced group (good students help less good ones). And this arrangement based on proficiency is what Vygotsky (1978) focuses on when speaking about Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). 04 teachers (44.44%) said that they arrange students as they sit together (option C) which means they did not allow students to choose with whom they want to work. The 01 remaining teacher allowed students to choose with whom they want to work (option D). This may help those students who do not feel comfortable and motivated to work with people they do not really know; and that may perturb their learning process.

### 3.3.2. Discussion of the Teachers' Questionnaire results

The answers of the 21 questions demonstrated that the majority of teachers worked in the English department University Dr Moulay Tahar Saida for a long time as they taught the

written expression module for more than 05 years. This may mean that the answers were based on a long experience of teaching especially in teaching writing. A large number of responses were positive in the sense that they strengthened ideas as they draw the attention to some points that would be good ideas to investigate.

The majority of teachers had positive perceptions about students' evaluation of writing when learning a foreign language. This plays the role of a motivating factor for students in learning writing; however, some of them thought that students see writing of little importance. That's why teachers used different techniques and methods to foster students' self- motivation to write. The majority of teachers thought that students suffer from varied problems in writing such as: grammar mistakes, poor ideas, lack of organization, interference of L1 and lack of vocabulary. And for that they tried to teach as much as possible the important aspects of writing which are grammar, content, and mechanics. But only few teachers gave importance to vocabulary. They thought that vocabulary is gained from reading, long exposure to the language learned and daily practice in writing.

In order to boost students' motivation teachers can easily incorporate the cooperative learning strategy in their teaching classes. Cooperative group/pair work can be used as a solution to motivate the students who lack motivation and to increase the motivation of those who are already motivated. The majority of teachers used this strategy as a method to enhance students' motivation to write. They sometimes mixed between the two strategies to compare students' behaviour in both situations and to allow students to develop their skills in different situations. Students tend to be more motivated and others strongly motivated when learning under the cooperative learning strategy.

The majority of teachers thought that students learning under the cooperative learning strategy have to know how to learn and how to criticise ideas of each other. Students have to know how to exchange ideas and opinions with other even if they are different from theirs, in

addition to build relationships and learn how to convince others. According to teachers the main reasons behind using the cooperative learning strategy is to encourage and motivate everyone to participate. This in turn, would help in correcting mistakes and exchanging ideas to build good writings. These results answered the questions raised at the first beginning of the research. Cooperative learning strategy has positive effects on learners' level of writing. Also teachers motivated their students using appropriate methods for the sake of improving students' level of writing.

To guarantee the success of the cooperative learning strategy some teachers interfered in the organization of small groups. The most significant intervention of teachers in small groups is when organizing them on the basis of proficiency i.e. putting good and less good students together in order to obtain heterogeneity among the group. This point was highlighted in the review of literature under Vygostky's theory part.

### **3.3.3. The Analysis of the in Class-Writing Test**

As it was described before this test will be about teaching a group of third year students (applied linguistics), first by the ancient method (individual learning) then they were write under the modern strategy which is the cooperative one. In both cases the learners were required at the end to submit written compositions. Each time the groups' compositions were corrected, analysed and then compared each cooperative copy with the copies of the members of the group to see the main differences in the students' level of writing in both situations.

The purpose of this test is to introduce to students this new method which is the cooperative learning strategy that some of them may not have used before. Secondly the test is to prove that this method has several positive outcomes on students' performance at many levels in writing.

At the level of language, students when working together will be for sure exposed to new vocabulary, i.e., when interacting with others they may hear new words from here and there, hence they will enlarge their background knowledge.

Moreover they will be in contact with their classmates' new styles. One group member may notice that s/he is not at the required level or s/he is not writing as his/her group mates do. The most important aim behind the implementation of such a test is to make a comparison and find out the main differences between students' individual pieces of writing and students' cooperative written pieces.

After writing a composition individually, students were asked to gather in small groups to write a composition. The two copies were compared and corrected. Each time we take the group's composition we analyse it and then we take the copies of each member of the group. We analyze them and then compare them with the group's composition.

To make it easy we divided the mistakes found in students' papers into 05 categories Grammar, Vocabulary, Content/Ideas, Organization of ideas and Mechanics. The analysis consisted of counting the number of errors in both copies. But it was not possible to mention the whole numbers of mistakes of the whole sample of students (30 individual copies and 6 cooperative copies) only the mistakes of 4 cooperative copies and 20 individual copies were mentioned in the tables below:

Categories of Errors	Types of Errors	Students' Individual Copies		Students' Cooperative Copies	
		N° of Errors	% of Errors	N° of Errors	% of Errors
Grammar Category	Wrong use of articles.	865	3.60%	31	3.30%
	Wrong use of tense.	2503	10 %	67	7.38%
	Wrong use of prepositions.	1524	5.69%	53	4.65%
	Wrong use of subject-verb agreement	2103	6.56%	61	5.51%
	Wrong use of word order.	1526	6.86%	64	5.83%
	Wrong use of sentence structure.	1505	6.74%	63	4.72%
	Wrong use of conjunctions.	1065	5.66%	53	5.56%
Vocabulary Category	Wrong collocation.	169	1.01%	09	0.96%
	Wrong word selection.	2104	6.26%	56	5.60%
	Interference of L1.	1087	5.76%	53	5.56%
Content/ Ideas Category	Irrelevance of the ideas expressed.	1040	5.45%	51	5.44%
	Wordiness.	1255	5.12%	47	4.01%
	Style.	1075	4.61%	43	3.58%
	Interference of L1 culture.	1098	5.77%	54	5.58%
Organization of ideas Category	Weaknesses in linking sentences.	1051	5.63%	43	3.58%
	Illogical order of the ideas presented in different paragraphs.	906	4.56%	41	4.40%
Mechanics Category	Indentation.	293	2.51%	23	2.45%
	Punctuation.	1630	5.59%	51	5.44%
	Capitalization.	404	1,68%	15	1.45%
	Spelling.	801	3.33%	20	2.13%
Total		21194	100%	937	100%

**Table 3: Representation of Students' Mistakes in Cooperative and Individual Copies**

### 3.3.4. Discussion of the In-class test and Comparison with Teachers' Questionnaire

Results shown in table three represents numbers and percentages of errors gathered from students' cooperative and individual written copies.

The first category is concerned with grammatical mistakes which according to the 09 teachers (100%) represents one of the most common problems students face when writing. Results show that the wrong use of tense represents (10%) of the whole mistakes students do when writing individual, in contrast to only (7.38%) when writing in small groups. The rest of the grammatical mistakes' percentages are always higher in students' individual copies than

in cooperative copies. This confirms what teachers reported when they were asked about students' difficulties in writing and also on which aspects of writing teacher should focus on.

In the questionnaire 09 teachers (100%) answered that students suffer from a lack of vocabulary and the table above shows that students working individually make (6.26%) of vocabulary mistakes whereas when working in groups it is only (5.60%). But from the teachers questionnaire only 03 teachers (33.33%) focused on teaching vocabulary when teaching writing, and they advised students to read in order to gain new vocabulary.

In addition, content is also another weakness seen in students' compositions for instance students tend to use too much word in order to express a simple idea that leads to what is called wordiness. It represents (5.12%) of the whole mistakes in individual copies and (4.01%) in cooperative copies. Again the majority of teachers (67%) perceived that students face difficulties in content when writing and that's why it's one of the basic aspects that teachers (100%) focused on when teaching writing.

Another weakness students face is the poor organization of ideas. When writing individually students do not know when and how to link sentences and ideas (5.63%); but it's less problematic when writing in groups (3.58%). 06 teachers (67%) agreed on the fact that students do not know how to organize their ideas in a coherent way.

The last category of mistakes is concerned with mechanics. In this category students are weak mostly in punctuation (5.59%) when writing individually and (5.44%) when writing in groups. Also they tend to be weak in spelling, representing (3.33%) in individual copies and (2.13%) in cooperative copies. And for this reason 08 teachers (87%) focused on mechanics when teaching writing.



### **3.4.-Research recommendations and pedagogical implications**

Many English language learners might find writing as a very difficult task. However writing can be easy if learners make some efforts like enough practice of writing and intensive reading in addition to teachers' guidance.

Students have to be aware of their weaknesses in order to deal with them for a better mastery of language. Also teachers have to expose students enough to professional written materials in order to have models to follow. Students have to practice writing and read as much as possible to be good writers.

For a better acquiring of the writing skill students have to be taught all writing aspects without exception mainly: grammar, content, vocabulary and mechanics. Also teachers have to adapt efficient strategies that go with students' needs.

Students may have negative attitudes towards pair/group work in general. And for that teachers need to introduce this strategy and take some time practicing under this strategy in order to help students to benefit from the cooperative strategy more than other strategies.

Teachers should use pair or small groups at first, especially at the beginning to be able to manage students and know how they perform under this strategy. Students can choose their partners, that would allow them manipulate how to work with different people. Also teachers can set groups based on different basis each time to allow students experiencing working in different groups.

Two main problems result from applying the cooperative strategy which are imposing ideas and unequal participation. These two problems can be dealt with by grading students individually to enhance students' participation, and by establishing shared group goals which creates cooperation between students in order to achieve the shared goals.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter is concerned with the results gathered thanks to two research tools. The first is the questionnaire administrated to a small number of teachers. It is concerned with teachers' opinions and perception of students' level of writing, students' motivation when using the cooperative strategy and students' performance under this strategy.

The second tool of research is the students' in-class test which aims at evaluating students' performance of writing under the cooperative strategy. Students are asked to write an individual composition and then gather in groups and produce cooperative compositions which are analysed and compared. Results show that the majority of teachers reported that students do not perceive writing of a valuable importance which results in a lack of motivation. This lack of motivation results in different forms of weakness, including grammar mistakes, lack of vocabulary, content, and mechanics weaknesses; all these need to be dealt with by teaching students all writing aspects.

When Comparing Students' copies with teachers' questionnaire they seem to confirm one another. The results show that students' mistakes decrease when working under the cooperative strategy and that the cooperative copies contain more or less styles of the most proficient member in the group of students.

Though this study has some limitations, it has confirmed the stated hypothesis which says that using cooperative strategy motivates students to produce better writing.

## **General Conclusion**

The present study aims at investigating the correlation between cooperative learning strategy in writing courses and motivation to improve writing level of 3<sup>rd</sup> year students of English as a foreign languages at the Department of English University Dr Moulay Tahar Saida. The hypothesis which is stated as follow: if 3<sup>rd</sup> year LMD students of English Department are enough exposed to the cooperative learning strategy they would be motivated to achieve a better writing production, is tested using two tools of research which are a teachers' questionnaire and a students' in-class writing test.

Trying to check the validity of this hypothesis, two theoretical chapters are allocated to this. The first chapter is devoted to the literature review about the cooperative learning strategy: its nature, its theoretical background, its characteristics and its outcomes. One of its affective outcomes focused on in this research is motivation which is dealt with in the second part of the chapter. This second part includes a general definition of motivation, its theoretical background, ending the chapter by theories that highlight the relation of cooperative strategy with motivation.

The Second chapter deals with the literature of writing and its approaches. First, it starts by a general definition of writing and its relation with the other skills, then moves to stages of developing the writing skill and the role it has in EFL/ESL classrooms. After that, it deals with different approaches in teaching writing in which is mentioned the relation of writing with the cooperative strategy. The chapter is concluded with the role of motivation as being a factor in improving writing.

The third chapter of the dissertation is allocated to the practical study which investigates the effects of the cooperative strategy on students' performance in writing and teachers' opinion and perception of students' level of writing and motivation under the cooperative

strategy. This chapter includes teachers' questionnaire analysis and discussion and students' in-class test analysis and discussion and it ends with the comparison of the teachers' questionnaire results with students' in-class results. Then giving some pedagogical implications and research suggestions drawn from the results. The chapter is ended by confirming the hypothesis and answering the questions stated at the very beginning of the research.

The present research can be further explored by focusing the investigation on the use of just one aspect of the cooperative learning such as pair reviewing or scaffolding when writing argumentative compositions.

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## Appendices

### Appendix I

#### Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear teachers,

We would be grateful if you could spend some time to answer the following questions about the teaching of written expression and the use of cooperative group work to improve your students' writing skill.

Your answer will be very helpful for the outcome of the undertaken research.

1. Degree

A. BA (License)

B. Master

C. Magister

D. PhD (Doctorate)

2. Work experience .....

3. How long have you been teaching written expression module?

.....

4. Have you benefited from any training or specialised training courses prior to starting to teach?

Yes  No

5. How do your students value the importance of learning writing in learning a foreign language?

- A. Very much
- B. Much
- C. Little
- D. Not important

6. Are you satisfied with your students' level in writing?

- Yes  No

7. What is the approach you follow in teaching writing?

- A. Process approach
- B. Product approach
- C. Others, please specify.....

Please explain the reason behind your choice.

.....

.....

8. What are the most common problems you noticed in students' writing? (you can tick more than one box)

- A. Grammar mistakes
- B. Poor content/ ideas
- C. Poor organization
- D. Interference of L1
- E. Poor vocabulary

9. To which aspect do you give much importance when teaching writing? (you can tick more than one box)

A. Grammar

B. Vocabulary

C. Content

D. Mechanics

10. What are the main causes of students' weakness in writing?

.....  
.....

11. In your opinion how can the student's level of writing be ameliorated?

.....  
.....

12. Do you motivate your students to write?

Yes  No

13. If yes, what methods you use to foster your students' motivation to write?

.....  
.....

14. To what extent you feel your students are self- motivated to write?

A. Very motivated

B. Motivated

C. Moderately motivated

D. Of little motivation E.

Unmotivated

15. What is the strategy you follow in teaching writing?

A. Cooperative learning strategy

B. Individual learning strategy

16. What is the most important advice you would give to teachers who are about to use the cooperative learning strategy for the first time?

.....  
.....

17. Are your students more motivated to write when using the cooperative learning strategy?

Yes  No

18. If yes, how do you perceive your students' motivation

A. Strongly motivated

B. Motivated

C. Less motivated

D. Not motivated

19. What are the social skills you want to realize behind using the cooperative learning strategy?

Social Skills	Yes	No
A. Criticizing ideas not people		
B. Encouraging everyone to participate		
C. Listening to others ' ideas although not agreeing with them		
D. Building positive relationships among group members		
E. Arguing ideas to persuade others		

If there are others, please specify them

.....  
.....

20. Do you interfere in the organization of small groups

Yes  No

21. If yes, on which basis do you set up the groups

A. Gender

B. Proficiency

C. Students' preference

D. Students sitting together  If

there are others please specify them

.....  
.....

Thank you for your contribution.





## Résumé

La présente étude vise à explorer les effets de l'apprentissage coopératif sur le niveau de l'expression écrite ainsi que son rôle motivateur sur les étudiants de 3ème année d'anglais comme langue étrangère au département d'anglais de l'Université Moulay Tahar de Saida pour produire de meilleures compositions. Afin d'étudier cette corrélation, une hypothèse suivante a été émise: l'utilisation de la stratégie de l'apprentissage coopératif crée ou favorise la motivation des étudiants à améliorer leur niveau d'expression écrite. La recherche vise à confirmer si l'apprentissage coopératif au cours des séances de l'expression écrite motive les étudiants non motivés et renforce ceux qui sont déjà motivés pour améliorer leur niveau d'expression écrite. Pour vérifier la validité de cette hypothèse, tout d'abord un questionnaire composé de vingt-un questions est remis aux enseignants (un échantillon de 09 professeurs qui enseignent ou ont déjà enseigné l'expression écrite aux étudiants de 3ème année) de l'expression écrite au département d'Anglais à l'Université Moulay Tahar de Saida. Ensuite, les étudiants sont invités à écrire des compositions qui se dressent comme un test en classe (un échantillon des étudiants de 3ème année au département d'Anglais de l'Université Moulay Tahar de Saida). Malgré le cadre limité de l'étude, les résultats de l'analyse des questionnaires des enseignants et du test des étudiants ont montré que la stratégie de l'apprentissage coopératif motive en effet les étudiants de 3ème année d'Anglais comme langue étrangère et les aide à faire face à leurs faiblesses en expression écrite, ainsi qu'à les résoudre ensemble. Aussi les résultats mettent en évidence l'existence d'un grand besoin à utiliser la stratégie d'apprentissage coopératif dans les séances de l'expression écrite lors de l'apprentissage des langues étrangères.