The effect of Cooperative Learning on the Developing of the writing skills in learning English as a foreign Language.

Sabah Mohamed Abbas Hamza Faris 1 Mahmood Ali Ahmed 2
1. Sudan University of Science and Technology-Faculty of Graduate Studies,
2. Sudan University of Science and Technology-Faculty of languages -Department of English
E.mail: sabooha1979@hotmail.com

ABSTRACT:
This study investigates the effects of cooperative learning in developing writing skill of the learners of English as a foreign Language (EFL) and their attitudes towards learning the English language using cooperative learning. The subjects of the study were 80 pupils representing the experimental group and another 80 pupils as a control group in Saudi Arabia intermediate school for girls. Pre and post tests were conducted to both groups. Teachers also responded to questionnaire to investigate their attitudes towards teaching English Language and specially using cooperative learning to develop writing skills. The results of the study showed that the pupils in the experimental group outperformed themselves significantly. The mean of stats score at (post-test) was (43.22) and the mean score at (pre-test) was (39.42) therefore we can conclude that there was significant decrease of statistics test from (post-test) to(pre-test) with (P-value 0.000) in the post experimental written test compared to their performance in the pre-experimental test. The results of the teachers’ questionnaire also revealed that the pupils developed better attitudes towards learning English using cooperative learning strategy, specially, to develop their writing skills. Therefore, it could be recommended to adopt cooperative learning in EFL classrooms to include other language skills as well as grammar. It is also recommended that further studies could be undertaken out with larger groups of learners.

Keywords: Cooperative learning, communicative competence, role assignment, Reinforcement.
INTRODUCTION:
psychologically push weak students leading to self-confidence ones and excellent performance of the target groups.'(1). It was also reported that, 'Teachers usually divide their classes into groups which contain at least from (4 -6) students. They distribute the jobs between the members of each group; for example: a leader, a reader, a speaker, a researcher and a writer. ' The students are to work in groups and in unified units – this allows all students to compete in self giving way– they also work as hard as they can to help their partners.(2) It was claimed that:'Cooperative learning promotes student learning and increases their retention. (3). It also encourages the levels of the students and focuses on weak ones'. That is because the groups and jobs are changeable. The leader this week can be the speaker or the reader the coming week.(4) strategies have been shown to improve academic performance, and cooperative learning leads to greater motivation to learn .(5) It improves self esteem and leads to more positive social behaviors. It was also pointed out that Cooperative Learning promotes language acquisition by providing comprehensible input in developmentally appropriate ways and in a supportive and motivating environment. (6). In the course of this study the researcher investigated the problem using questionnaires and written tests to collect the data. The results were analyzed and discussed and recommendations were proposed to help EFL learners develop their writing skills .

Materials and Methods
Intermediate School in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. One class as the experimental group and the other one Almost throughout the world, English has become a necessity and a dominating language. The ability to communicate in English is the aim of a lot of people nowadays. Saudi Arabia is a developing country and there is a great demand for learning English. Recently, the Saudi government, as a way of reinforcing English proficiency, has introduced clear changes in the curriculums of all grades. However, its effort did not include the quality of teachers and/or teaching methods. Many techniques have been developed to help improve teaching English as a foreign language (EFL); therefore, teachers should always prepare themselves for the application and/or integration of innovative and productive teaching techniques into the classroom. One of the teaching techniques that have proven effective is Cooperative Language Learning (CLL), which was derived from the field of developmental psychology. Cooperative learning is a successful teaching strategy in which small teams, each with students of different levels of ability, use a variety learning activities to improve their understanding of a target subject. Each member of a team is responsible for not only learning what is taught, but also for helping teammates learn, thus creating an atmosphere of achievement. Students work through assignments till all group members successfully understand and complete the task. It was pointed out that cooperative Learning is a modern method in teaching which

The Participants in the study were two classes of the third year students that the researcher taught at Al-Khaleel
communicative competence (2) the effects of cooperative learning on the EFL learners’ writing skills motivation in learning English as a foreign language, and (3) EFL learners' attitudes towards learning writing skills of English language throw cooperative learning are presented below.

**The students' pre and post tests**

For the measurement of the students’ writing competence, two written tests were conducted by the students,(both control and experimental groups). To confirm this hypothesis first, the study estimates the mean and standard devotion of the variables in the experimental group total marks. The following table shows the values of the mean and standard devotion;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>39.42</td>
<td>7.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>43.22</td>
<td>6.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source; own calculation based on data

**Results and Discussion**

Both the quantitative and the qualitative findings are presented to respond the research questions on (1) the effects of cooperative learning on the improvement of EFL learners’ language ability in terms of the written test from (pos -test) to(pre-test).

Second, to test the statistical evidence of the difference between the numbers pre and post (total marks) above result.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>t. test value</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>different between the numbers pre -test and post-test (total)</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source; own calculation based on data.

Table (4.2), showed the following

1. T. test value (3.33) with sig (0.001), and this value is less than statistical significant (0.05) this indicates that, there are differences of statistical significant, between the experimental group (pre-test) and (post-test).
2. The mean of stats score at (post-test ) was (43.22) and the mean score at (pre -test) was (39.42) therefore we can conclude that there was significant decrease of statistics test from (pos -test) to(pre-test).
4.0.2 The experimental group (Pre and post tests Structure)

Table (4.3) the values of the mean and standard deviation between the numbers pre and post test (Structure)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>standard devotion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>14.93</td>
<td>3.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>16.62</td>
<td>2.73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source; own calculation based on data

Second, to test the statistical evidence of the difference between the numbers pre and post test (Structure) above result. The study is an independent samples t-test of significance differences between the pre and post tests.

Table (4.4) the values of the t. test (independent samples t. test) Structure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>t. test value</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>different between the numbers pre and post test (Structure)</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source; own calculation based on data

2. The mean of stats score at (post test) was (16.62) and the mean score at (pre test) was (14.93) therefore we can conclude that there was significant decrease of stats score from (post test) to (pre test).

4.0.3 The experimental group (Pre and post tests Spelling)

Table (4.5) the values of the mean and standard deviation in spelling differences between pre and post tests of the experimental group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>standard deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre- test</td>
<td>11.271</td>
<td>2.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post- test</td>
<td>12.85</td>
<td>2.47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source; own calculation based on data

The study is independent samples t-test of significance differences of the different between the numbers between the pre test and post tests.

Table (4.6) the values of the t. test (independent samples t. test) Spelling

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>t. test value</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>different between the numbers pre and post (Spelling)</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source; own calculation based on data
Table (4.6), showed the following
2. The mean of stats score at (post test) was (12.85) and the mean score at (pre test) was (11.27) therefore we can conclude that there was significant decrease of statistics test from (post test) to (pre test).

4.0.4 The experimental group (Pre and post tests Idea)
Table (4.7) the values of the mean and standard devotion- in the (Idea) differences between pre and post tests of the experimental group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>standard devotion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre test</td>
<td>13.06</td>
<td>2.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post test</td>
<td>13.77</td>
<td>1.88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source; own calculation based on data samples T. test of significance differences between the (pre test) and (post test).

Table (4.8) the values of the t. test (independent samples t. test)- Idea

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>t. test value</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>different between the numbers pre and post (Idea)</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>0.041</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source; own calculation based on data
Table (4.8), showed the following
there are differences of statistical significant, between the (pre test) and (post test) (Idea)

4.1 The written evaluation between the experimental group-controlled group
following table shows the values of the mean and standard devotion;

Table (4.9) the values of the mean and standard deviation between the experimental group-controlled group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>standard devotion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>experimental group</td>
<td>43.22</td>
<td>6.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>controlled group</td>
<td>36.10</td>
<td>8.56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source; own calculation based on data
study is independent samples t. test of significance differences between the (experimental group) and (controlled group).

Second, to test the statistical evidence of different between the numbers (experimental group) and (controlled group) above result. The
Table (4.10) the values of the t. test (independent samples t. test) between the numbers (experimental group) and (controlled group)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>t. test value</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>different between the numbers (experimental group) and (controlled group)</td>
<td>6.47</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: own calculation based on data

Table (4.10), showed the following that there was significant decrease of statistics test from (post) to (controlled group).

4.2. The control Group (pre and post tests total marks)

To affirm this hypothesis first, the study estimates the mean and standard devotion of the variables. The following table shows the values of the mean and standard devotion.

Table (4.11) the values of the mean and standard devotion- between the pre and post tests total marks of the control group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>standard devotion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre test</td>
<td>36.63</td>
<td>8.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post test</td>
<td>36.10</td>
<td>8.56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: own calculation based on data

Second, to test the statistical evidence of different between the numbers pre and post total marks above result. The study is the (t) test

Table (4.12) the values of the t. test (independent samples t. test)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>t. test value</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>different between the numbers pre and post (total marks)- controlled group</td>
<td>0.391</td>
<td>0.696</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: own calculation based on data

Table (4.12), showed the following Result of questionnaire were discussed here in relation to the study hypotheses

Table (4): Frequency distribution table for the teacher’ questionnaire

To test the statistical evidence of different between the numbers of those agree, neutral and who don’t agree for the above result. The study is the (t) test

T. test value (0.391) with sig (0.696), and this value is greater than statistical significant (0.05) this indicates that, there are no differences of statistical significant, between the (controlled group) (pre) and (post) tests.

Result of teachers’ questionnaire
A test of significance differences between the answers for all statements.

Table (4) The (t) value for the respondents answers to all wording

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>average</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
<th>t-test</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Working in groups enhances the students’ communication skills.</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>26.40</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Working in groups stimulates the students’ creative thinking skills</td>
<td>4.87</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>29.5</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Working in groups enables teachers to use skills which individual assessments do not.</td>
<td>4.63</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>13.37</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Working in groups fosters exchange of knowledge, information and experience.</td>
<td>4.90</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>34.10</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. While working in groups, students spend more time generating and planning ideas than when writing alone.</td>
<td>4.62</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>11.25</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Students have the chance to express their ideas in the group</td>
<td>4.47</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Working in groups helps them to have a greater responsibility - for themselves and the group</td>
<td>4.63</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>16.08</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Working in groups is a waste of time as students keep explaining things to others.</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>Seldom</td>
<td>6.95</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Working in groups improves students writing performance.</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>6.81</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Working in groups helps students to work in a more relaxed atmosphere.</td>
<td>4.47</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>10.35</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Having completed group projects, students feel they have more confident working with other students.</td>
<td>4.53</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>14.69</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Working in groups enables students to help weaker partners in the group.</td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>14.10</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Teaching English through Cooperative methods results in positive attitudes towards learning English language</td>
<td>4.67</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>19.03</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Working in groups saves time for the teacher to achieve more goals during the lesson.</td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>12.99</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Working in groups makes problem-solving easier.</td>
<td>4.52</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>10.64</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Working in groups makes the teacher with no role in class.</td>
<td>1.90</td>
<td>Seldom</td>
<td>6.27</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Overall, cooperative learning is a worthwhile experience.</td>
<td>4.63</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>18.25</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Working in groups should be encouraged/continued.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.83</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>26.49</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: the author survey – questionnaire results.

Table (4), showed the following:

1. Working in groups should be encouraged/continued.
2. Working in groups enhances the students’ communication skills.
3. Working in groups fosters exchange of knowledge, information and experience.
4. Working in groups stimulates the students’ creative thinking skills.
5. Working in groups enables teachers to use skills which individual assessments do not.
6. Working in groups helps them to have a greater responsibility - for themselves and the group.
7. While working in groups, students spend more time generating and planning ideas than when writing alone.
8. Working in groups helps them to have a greater responsibility - for themselves and the group.

(1) T. value have a significant different among the group of the sample study for the wording no (1) reached (0.000), and this value is less than statistical significant (0.05) this indicate that, there are differences of statistical significant, between the group of the sample size answering favoring those who Always with: (Working in groups enhances the students’ communication skills).

(2) T. value have a significant different among the group of the sample study for the wording no (2) reached (0.000), and this value is less than statistical significant (0.05) this indicate that, there are differences of statistical significant, between the group of the sample size answering favoring those who Always with: (Working in groups stimulates the students’ creative thinking skills).

(3) T. value have a significant different among the group of the sample study for the wording no (3) reached (0.000), and this value is less than statistical significant (0.05) this indicate that, there are differences of statistical significant, between the group of the sample size answering favoring those who Always with: (Working in groups helps them to have a greater responsibility - for themselves and the group).

(4) T. value have a significant different among the group of the sample study for the wording no (4) reached (0.000), and this value is less than statistical significant (0.05) this indicate that, there are differences of statistical significant, between the group of the sample size answering favoring those who Seldom with: (Students have the chance to express their ideas in the group).

(5) T. value have a significant different among the group of the sample study for the wording no (5) reached (0.000), and this value is less than statistical significant (0.05) this indicate that, there are differences of statistical significant, between the group of the sample size answering favoring those who Seldom with: (Working in groups helps them to have a greater responsibility - for themselves and the group).

(6) T. value have a significant different among the group of the sample study for the wording no (6) reached (0.000), and this value is less than statistical significant (0.05) this indicate that, there are differences of statistical significant, between the group of the sample size answering favoring those who Always with: (While working in groups, students spend more time generating and planning ideas than when writing alone).

(7) T. value have a significant different among the group of the sample study for the wording no (7) reached (0.000), and this value is less than statistical significant (0.05) this indicate that, there are differences of statistical significant, between the group of the sample size answering favoring those who Seldom with: (While working in groups, students spend more time generating and planning ideas than when writing alone).

(8) T. value have a significant different among the group of the sample study for the wording no (8) reached (0.000), and this value is less than statistical significant (0.05) this indicate that, there are differences of statistical significant, between the group of the sample size answering favoring those who Seldom with: (Working in groups helps them to have a greater responsibility - for themselves and the group).
confident working with other students).

(12) . t. value have a significant different among the group of the sample study for the wording no (12) reached (0.000), and this value is less than statistical significant (0.05) this indicate that, there are differences of statistical significant, between the group of the sample size answering favoring those who Always with: (Working in groups is a waste of time as students keep explaining things to others).

(9) . t. value have a significant different among the group of the sample study for the wording no (9) reached (0.000), and this value is less than statistical significant (0.05) this indicate that, there are differences of statistical significant, between the group of the sample size answering favoring those who Always with: (Working in groups improves students writing performance).

(13) . t. value have a significant different among the group of the sample study for the wording no (13) reached (0.000), and this value is less than statistical significant (0.05) this indicate that, there are differences of statistical significant, between the group of the sample size answering favoring those who Always with: (Teaching English through Cooperative methods results in positive attitudes towards learning English language).

(14) . t. value have a significant different among the group of the sample study for the wording no (14) reached (0.000), and this value is less than statistical significant (0.05) this indicate that, there are differences of statistical significant, between the group of the sample size answering favoring those who Always with: (Working in groups helps students to work in a more relaxed atmosphere).

(11) . t. value have a significant different among the group of the sample study for the wording no (11) reached (0.000), and this value is less than statistical significant (0.05) this indicate that, there are differences of statistical significant, between the group of the sample size answering favoring those who Always with: (Having completed group projects, students feel they have more

favoring those who with: (Working in groups makes problem-solving easier).

(16) . t. value have a significant different among the group of the sample study for the wording no (16) reached (0.000), and this value is less than statistical significant (0.05) this
(Working in groups should be encouraged/continued).

4.4 Recommendations
Based on the findings of this study, the researcher recommends the following:
- Teachers are recommended to use cooperative learning in their classroom to teach the different language skills and all other language aspects such as grammar.
- Teachers should be trained on the use of this strategy.
- Syllabus designers are also encouraged to take into consideration cooperative learning when designing syllabus.

4.5 Suggestions for further Study
Though some positive findings were identified in this study to claim the effectiveness of cooperative learning on the EFL Al-khaleej National school learners’ language learning and motivation toward learning English, some limitations of the present study listening were not measured in this study. With time and support permitted, future research might develop reliable and valid measurements to include the other language skills of reading, and listening, to examine the effects of cooperative learning on EFL learners’ overall communicative competence. Another suggestion for further study is about the teacher development in cooperative learning. Being limited to the range of the research questions, which focused on the effects of cooperative learning in EFL teaching, this study did not investigate the possible factors that might affect the success of teacher development in cooperative learning. What are the possible reasons for some teachers to indicate that, there are differences of statistical significant, between the group of the sample size answering favoring those who Seldom with: (Working in groups makes the teacher with no role in class.).

(17). t. value have a significant different among the group of the sample study for the wording no (17) reached (0.000), and this value is less than statistical significant (0.05) this indicate that, there are differences of statistical significant, between the group of the sample size answering favoring those who Always with: (Overall, cooperative learning is a worthwhile experience).

(18) .t. value have a significant different among the group of the sample study for the wording no (18) reached (0.000), and this value is less than statistical significant (0.05) this indicate that, there are differences of statistical significant, between the group of the sample size answering favoring those who Always with:

might be noted before the results could be generalized.
Firstly, the samples of the participants were restricted to only two classes of the third Intermediate school students. Future studies on more student participants or more teachers implementing cooperative learning in more classes are recommended in order to generate more evidence on the effects of cooperative learning. Moreover, the data collected for the analysis of the students’ communicative competence was based on the design of two written tests. Though four aspects of written communicative competence were under investigation, the students’ language skills in, reading, and
investigate the factors related to the success of teacher development in cooperative learning

References

7- http://www.clcrc.com/indec#essays

become successful and frequent users of cooperative learning? Further research is, therefore, suggested to