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Faculty of Letters and Foreign Languages
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Teachers’ Attitude Towards the Effect of Peer Interaction on EFL Students’ Comprehension of Lessons

Case study teachers of english departement in Larbi ben M’hidi University

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Master Degree in the Didactics of English Language Teaching

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Dedication

I thank Allah, the Almighty, for everything

This work is dedicated to

My parents: Thank you for your encouragement and motivation all the way long. Your support and constant love have sustained me throughout my life. Thank you for your never-ending support. Thank you both for all your sacrifice.

Love you both.

My dear brothers and sister. Thank you for offering me the suitable environment to accomplish this work.

My besties: Loufy, Rahim and the best fellas that support me in every step Thank you for your emotional support and caring. Thank you for being here whenever I needed you. I do love you.

Big thanks to my friends who stood by me through my journey
Acknowledgments

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, Most Merciful, All the Praise is due to Him alone, the Sustainer of the entire World.

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I am enormously thankful to the member of the jury: Mr Farid Chaira who accepted to read and correct my work with an extreme good will.

I am likewise immensely grateful to all the teachers in the English Department.
ABSTRACT

The present study aims at investigating teachers’ perception towards the role of peer interaction in enhancing English as Foreign Language learners’ lesson comprehension. The basic hypothesis of this study sets out that teachers’ would have a positive attitude towards the effect of peer interaction on EFL students’ comprehension of lessons. In order to verify the validity of the tested hypothesis, a descriptive method was applied. The data was gathered from a questionnaire administered to thirty (30) teachers of English at Oum EL Bouaghi University. The findings of the teachers’ questionnaire revealed that teachers consider peer interaction as an important strategy that should be used to enhance learners’ comprehension. Thus, the stated hypothesis is confirmed.
LIST OF KEY WORDS

Lesson Comprehension

Peer Interaction

The Tested Hypothesis

Foreign Language

Classroom Atmosphere

Native Speakers

Non-native Speakers
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ELT: English Language Teaching

FL: Foreign Language

L1: First Language

L2: Second Language

SLA: Second Language Acquisition

TEFL: Teaching English as a Foreign Language

ELL: English Language Learning

ELLS: English Language Learners
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General Introduction

1. Statement of The Problem

The problem is stated through the theme which is the use of peer interaction is minimized in EFL classes. Hence, the students’ lesson comprehension is not improved. Or in another way, total participation inside the classroom during lesson or in lesson comprehension.

2. Aim of the Study

The aim of the study is to check the teachers’ attitudes towards peer interaction on enhancing EFL students’ comprehension of lesson and grandemize the use of such strategy compared to another strategy classroom interaction which is the most used way to achieve a better atmosphere inside the classroom and equipe a totallike comprehension.

3. Research Question and Hypthesis

Do EFL teachers have positive attitudes towards the use of peer interaction in enhancing students’ comprehension of lessons.

On the basis of the stated question, we hypothesize the following:

EFL teachers would have positive attitudes towards the use of peer interaction in enhancing students’ comprehension of lessons.
Chapter one

Theoretical background

Introduction

Most researchers in the field of foreign language learning assume that participation in communicative interaction is one way in which a foreign language (FL) is learned by learners. Activities that occur during interaction (e.g., the provision of corrective feedback noticing, the negotiation of meaning) are considered to play an integral role in the learning process, especially when it comes to lesson comprehension. The results from many studies indicated that what happened during interaction (e.g., clarification, requests,………) were linked to improved comprehension on the part of learner (Long, 1996).

In this chapter, some light will be shed on peer interaction as one type of interaction and lesson comprehension. In section one, we will deal with common issues about peer interaction. We will then talk about some strategies that facilitate peer interaction in order to obtain a better classroom atmosphere. In the second section, we will provide a clear picture of what comprehension is about. The types of comprehension, types of comprehension questions and comprehension strategies for English language learners will also be presented. In the third section, attention will be paid to the relationship between comprehension and interaction in broad.
Section one

1.1.1-Peer Interaction

According to Hadfield (2008), in his book *Introduction to Teaching English*, the word interaction involves more than just putting a message together; it involves also responding to other people. This means choosing the language that is appropriate for the person you are talking to (interlocutor); it also means, responding to what others say, taking turns in a conversation, encouraging people to speak, changing the topic, asking people to repeat or explain what they say and so on, in order to facilitate communication among them. In this sense, Nunan (1991) states that “learning to speak in a second or foreign language will be facilitated when learners actively engaged in attempting to communicate” (p. 51).

In addition to that, Allwright has defined interaction as: “the fundamental fact of pedagogy” and that “successful pedagogy involves the successful management of classroom interaction” (As cited in Ellis, 1997, p. 173). From that, we can notice that classroom interaction is one of the primary ways in which learners obtain data.

Two types of classroom interaction may be mentioned:

1.1.1.1-Teacher-Learner Interaction: In simple words, it is the way in which teachers interact with their students relying on the type of input they should provide their students with in order to interact with their teacher as a background of comprehension to a certain topic or a lesson (As stated in Lyster, 2007, pp. 102-103).

1.1.1.2-Learner-Learner Interaction: It occurs among learners and through speaking tasks in order to negotiate meaning.

More important, interaction among pairs in which as a maximum of two students collaborating or engaging is called peer interaction for the sake of giving students
opportunities to speak and practice speaking skill in the classroom. This also aims to receive feedback in the target language through correcting each other’s errors or asking questions to each other when working in pairs. In recent years, peer interaction has been considered as an important strategy in the field of second language acquisition since it needs at least the involvement of two persons who collaborate in face-to-face interaction when using a language in real communication. It is also most beneficial when it is designed with small groups or peers rather than with teacher or in whole classroom since it allows students to receive feedback through correcting each other’s mistakes. In recent studies, it is approved that social media spaces such as Facebook and Twitter also provide the platform for peer interaction at a more general level and at a global scale in more effective way taking into consideration concentration and respecting the members, each member with his turn i.e ; no interruption.

When it comes to peer interaction, which is understood as the relationships and roles developed by students in the classroom environment when undertaking any kind of task or activity, teachers are the ones with the “power” to control the way students can organize themselves in order to develop a specific activity. Teachers tend to create some sets of grouping arrangements (whole class, individual, pair and group work) for students to share and construct knowledge about language. Nevertheless, in contexts in which English is not seen as a priority, this grouping issue is naturally generated by the dynamics of classroom interaction that do not necessarily have to do with the academic interests of students: they usually join their close friends, partners they like to talk with, etc....

Furthermore, a teacher can take advantage of the results by developing alternatives in which students profit from the interaction with their peers not only as a way of identifying each other’s mistakes or understanding what the teacher wants to say, but also in order to construct knowledge and language learning from the community towards the individual. It means how the product of the interactions with other students that are supposed
to deal with the same knowledge might actually contribute to each one of the students learning process as they will have the opportunity to listen to and use what others have to say in order to compare and contrast with concepts and opinions they already have. (Bauwens, 2005, p. 12)

1.1.1.3-Strategies to Facilitate Peer Interaction:

1.1.1.3.1-Arrange the Room to Facilitate Peer Interaction

Three ways teachers can help to achieve this are: (a) keep groups small, for example, it’s much easier for two people to sit close together than for a group of six to do so; (b) explain reasons for asking students to sit close together or ask them to guess our reasons; (c) be persistent, as most new behaviors take some getting used to.

1.1.1.3.2-Start with Pairs

Introduce students to group activities by starting with pair activities. For a simple pair activity, students can take turns to do tasks. One does the first task, thinking aloud as they do it. Their partner acts as their coach. Roles reverse for the next task.

1.1.1.3.3-Combine Pairs into Foursomes

Students first work alone to write their ideas on a task/problem. Next, students pair with a group mate and discuss what each wrote. Finally, students form a square, that is, each student takes a turn to discuss with the other twosome about the dialogue they had with their original partner. The foursome then further discuss.

1.1.1.3.4-Group Members have Numbers

To facilitate random selection of who will represent their group, the members of each group can have a number based on where they are cited in the group. In order to check if
everyone has understood the group’s work. Individual group members can be asked at random to give and explain their group’s answer(s).

1.1.1.3.4-Group Members have Numbers

Teachers can choose a collaborative skill that students need to use more or ask students to nominate one. Next, the class discusses the importance of the skill and a few phrases used to deploy the skill. For instance, the simple but too seldom used skill of showing appreciation to others for their contributions to the group can be enacted via such phrases as, “Thanks a lot for …,” “I really appreciate that you…,” and “I owe you one for …”. Such discussions can be held just before a group activity, and students can choose a partner in their group and, during the group activity, students can count how many times their partner thanks someone. At the end of the activity or even better in the middle of the activity, students report to their group on how many times their partner thanked others.

1.1.1.3.6-Encourage Students to Remember Successful Peers

Teachers start by telling students about successful peers they were or are in, including analysis of why the peer succeeded. For example, the peer might have succeeded because both parts did their fair share or because weaker members were encouraged and supported, or because peer members shared a common identity, such as sports teams share a common identity via their team names, colors, and mascots. Then, students share their own successes in working in peer and why they think the peer was successful.

1.1.1.3.7-Do Individual Assessment

After students have worked in a pair, and after they have learned from and with each other, it may often be best for them to do individual assessments, that is, students learn in a pair, but they take assessments which measure individuals’ progress.
1.1.1.3.8-Ask Early Finishers to Help Others

If a group has finished before others, they can divide up and circulate to other groups to provide assistance. Students need to understand that assistance means guiding others from the side, not doing for others, or joining them into fouresomes.

1.1.1.4-The Complexity of Peer Interaction

Batstone and Philp (2013) categorize peer interactions in terms of two themes: (1) interactions across time and (2) interaction across public and private spaces. In terms of interactions across time, the authors point out that learners become involved in various interactions before or after other interactions. Batstone and Philp’s (2013) second theme involves interactions in public and private spaces. They define talk in public space as communication that is intended “to be heard by everyone in the class (in the case of teacher-led discourse) or by all members of the group (in the case of group work)” (Batstone & Philp, 2013, p. 110). Talk in private spaces, on the other hand, refers to communication that is intended for a subset of learners or to oneself. Peer interactions in time and space can be both encouraged or limited by the control of the teacher, depending mostly on the strength of the teacher-student interaction (Philp et al., 2014). I would like to define the observable and usually dominate level of interactions as the “superordinate layer” of classroom interactions. This layer is usually filled by either teacher-student interactions during whole-class discussions. However, it may contain student-student interactions during designed activities.

However, a second layer of interaction also exists in the classroom that I define as the “subordinate layer”. This second layer is not easily observable because it involves a complex network of interactions that develop beneath the surface of the more dominant layer. For example, if the teacher-student interactions maintain the full attention of the students, then the network of peer interactions on the subordinate layer may be smaller.
1.1.1.5-Types of Peer Interaction

In Storch’s (2002) model of dyadic interaction. In the language classroom, she determined that there are two relevant variables to define the level of collaboration of a particular pairing. These variables are “equality” and “mutuality.” She suggests that the levels of these variables can determine the level of collaboration on a task and thus learning through co-construction. To begin, Storch (2002) defines equality as “the degree of control or authority over the task. Equality describes more than merely equal distribution of turns of equal contributions but an equal degree of control over the direction of a task” (p. 127). In other words, a relationship is considered to be equal if the participants willingly take directions from each other and consider each other as equal contributors to the task at hand. Equality includes the spectrum of relationships involving expert-novice or equal peer relationships. Within the present framework, equality refers to interactions in which peers equally share control over the interactional resource and indicate parity in content and/or language competence. Equality in competence and control is different however than the mutuality or the “symmetry” (van Lier & Matsuo, 2000) of an interaction. According to Storch (2002), mutuality refers to the level of engagement by the interlocutors in the interaction, including features such as reciprocal feedback and the sharing of ideas.

1.1.1.5.1-Interaction with more Capable Peers

Philp and Mackey (2010). In a study, they interviewed university students of French in stimulated recall sessions about their classroom interactions with their teacher and peers. They found that some members of the studied class had been identified by classmates as being more expert than others. Furthermore, the less proficient learners also “appreciated the expertise that fellow learners brought and welcomed modeling and feedback from them” (Philp & Mackey, 2010, p. 217). This form of interaction with peers often occurs in the
subordinate layer of classroom interaction during peer interactions.

Philp and Mackey’s study results also confirm this in a poignant example in which a less capable peer appeals to a more capable peer for help after a classroom centered role-play to clarify a misunderstanding that occurred during the activity. This highlights perhaps a different comfort level in the subordinate layer that impacts how learners provide help to each other. Expert peers can be a helpful resource in other situations as well.

1.1.1.5.1-Interaction with Equal Peers

Interactions with equal peers are determined when there is a high level of equality and mutuality between the participating players. In such interactions, learners make equal contributions that determine the direction of the task or intended action. At mutuality suggests that learners equally reciprocate their ideas, and these ideas are accepted by all the players. In his study on collective scaffolding, Donato (1994) observed that learners in the language class can and do engage in activity that is helpful for novices to reach higher levels of understanding. De Guerrero and Villamil (2000) additionally suggest that peers can benefit from knowledge made explicit by equal peers. In their study on peer scaffolding, they conclude that students gain new knowledge and learn important lessons through reciprocally extended peer support.

1.1.1.5.2-Interactions with Less Capable Peers

Interactions with less capable peers suggest a relationship in which an expert assumes a teacher like role with one or more classmates. This entails an expert working with and actively encouraging other members to participate in a task (Storch, 2002). This interaction type also includes the concept of peer tutoring, where one peer instructs a novice peer or peers in one way or another. Philp et al. (2014) propose that the benefits of such interactions stem from the cognitive and relational proximity of peers in comparison to a teacher, who is further
removed in terms of status and competence. Van Lier and Matsuo (2000) point out that “students may reap significant benefits from speaking with interlocutors of lower proficiency than themselves, since they will practice a range of conversational skills which are quite similar to those used by native speakers in similar situations” (p. 283).
SECTION TWO

1.1.2. Comprehension (Lesson Comprehension)

1.1.2.1-Definition

Comprehension is the ability to understand and get meaning from spoken and written language; it defines reading comprehension as the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language. It uses the words extracting and constructing to emphasize both the importance and quality of the text as a determinant of reading comprehension.

Synonyms: understanding, grasp, conception, realization.

Comprehension entails three elements:

• The reader: Who is doing the comprehending

• The text: That is to be comprehended

• The activity: In which comprehension is a part considering the reader, all the capacities are involved including abilities, knowledge, and experiences that a person brings to the act of reading. Text is broadly construed to include any printed text or electronic text. In considering activity, we include the purposes, processes, and consequences associated with the act of reading.

More importantly, lesson comprehension refers to the ability to understand or grasp meanings from spoken language made by colleagues or teacher and written language by teacher or classmates during class in order to provide more clarification for a certain topic concerning the curriculum.
1.1.2.2-Types of Comprehension

1.1.2.2.1-Literal Comprehension

Understanding of what has been read is demonstrated by retelling and summarizing in one’s own words what has been made explicit – the facts. A reader retells or summarizes the facts to communicate what is made explicit through the elements of a story (fiction). The facts are summarized to communicate what is made explicit through the elements of information (nonfiction). (Lynch, 1996)

1.1.2.2.2-Inferential Comprehension

Express what is implicit within the text. Make inferences, interpretations, and reflections supported by evidence: text-to-text, text-to-self, and text-to-world connections.

1.1.2.2.3-Analytical Comprehension

Evaluate the quality of writing in a story or information against the Traits of Writing: ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions. How rich is the quality and originality of the writing?

Evaluate the quality of ‘small moment scenes’ in narrative writing. How effectively does the author paint a movie in the mind of the reader by ‘showing, not telling’ the setting, action, thoughts and feeling, and dialogue? (Spolsky, 1989)

Evaluate the quality of ideas, details, and thought in non-narrative writing. How effectively does the author stimulate the reader to notice more, think more, and realize more about the topic?. (Lynch, 1996)
1.1.2.3-Types of Comprehension Questions

1.1.2.3.1-Literal Questions

In order to get direct answers, these are the easiest to score as the answers are clearly and explicitly stated in the passage. (Thornbury, 1991)

1.1.2.3.2-Cause and Effect Questions

Such questions generally begin with the word “Why”. Learners have to read the passage clearly to find either the cause or the effect. Cause and Effect questions can also appear in other forms. Sometimes, learners need to find the effect of the cause.

1.1.2.3.3-Inferential Questions

This is the type of questions that are generally more challenging for most students. The answers are not clearly stated in the passage, but are usually implied by the author. Learners need to learn to draw conclusions from what they have read in the passage in order to answer such questions. (Thornbury, 1991)

1.1.2.3.4-Vocabulary Questions

This type requires the child to understand the meaning of a word or phrase, using contextual clues. There is a way of asking vocabulary questions:

The student is given the meaning of a word or phrase and has to find the exact word or phrase from the passage.

1.1.2.4-Comprehension Strategies for English Language Learners

ELLs at all levels of English proficiency and literacy development will benefit from improved comprehension skills, which allow them to:

- read more accurately.
- follow a text or story more closely. Identify important events and concepts in a text.
- master new concepts in their content-area classes. Complete assignments and assessments.
- feel motivated to read in school and for pleasure.

There are a number of ways to build ELLs' comprehension skills. Often, standard strategies that teachers use in mainstream classrooms are a good starting point—they just need to be tweaked with ELLs' language and academic needs in mind.

The focus will be on strategies that are part of three main approaches: building background knowledge, teaching vocabulary explicitly, and checking comprehension frequently. (Swain, 1985)

1.1.2.4.1. Build Background Knowledge

Draw on students' existing knowledge. Students may already possess content knowledge that they cannot yet demonstrate in English. Look for opportunities to make associations between students' experiences and new content. Allow students to use their native language with peers for a quick brainstorm to discover what they know about a topic before presenting their ideas to the whole class.

Build students' background knowledge. Students with limited or interrupted schooling may not have the same level of knowledge as their peers, especially when it comes to historical or cultural topics. When starting a new lesson, look for references that you may need to explicitly explain.

Take students on a tour of the text. Each time you hand out a new textbook, take students on a "virtual tour." Show them different elements of the text, such as the table of contents and the glossary, and discuss how these sections can be helpful. Explain how the text is organized,
pointing out bold print, chapter headings, and chapter summaries. Once students learn how to recognize these elements, they will be able to preview the text independently. Remember that students need to know how to use a tool in order for it to be helpful.

Use a "picture-walk." You can use this strategy for fiction or nonfiction books. Walk through the book with the students, pointing out photographs, illustrations, and other graphic elements. Ask them what they notice about the pictures and how they think those details may relate to the story or content.

Use outlines to scaffold comprehension. Provide a brief, simple outline of a reading assignment or an oral discussion in advance of a new lesson. This will help ELLs pick out the important information as they listen or read. (Pinter, 2006)

1.1.2.4.2. Teach Vocabulary Explicitly

1.1.2.4.2.1-Focus on key Vocabulary: Choose the vocabulary that your students need to know in order to support their reading development and content-area learning.

Provide student-friendly definitions for key vocabulary.

Include signal and directional words: Remember that students may also need explicit instruction in signal or directional words ("because" and "explain"), in addition to key content vocabulary ("photosynthesis" and "evolution").

1.1.2.4.2.2-Use a "picture-walk" for vocabulary: Once students know a new word's definition, ask them to connect those new words to the pictures they see in the text.

1.1.2.4.2.3Teach students to actively engage with vocabulary: Teach students to underline, highlight, make notes, and list unknown vocabulary words as they read.

1.1.2.4.2.4-Give students practice with new words: Ensure that your students can
- Define a word.

- Recognize when to use that word.

- Understand multiple meanings (such as the word "party").

- Decode and spell that word.

**1.1.2.4.2.5-Incorporate New Words into Discussions and Activities**: For students to really know a word, they must use it—or they will lose it. Use new words in class discussions or outside of class, in other contexts such as on field trips. Give the students as many opportunities to use and master the new vocabulary as possible.

**1.1.2.5- Check Comprehension Frequently**

**1.1.2.5.1-Use Informal Comprehension Checks**: To test students' ability to put materials in sequence, for example, print sentences from a section of the text on paper strips, mix the strips, and have students put them in order.

**1.1.2.5.2-Test Comprehension with Student-friendly Questions**: After reading, test students' comprehension with carefully crafted questions, using simple sentences and key vocabulary from the text. These questions can be at the:

- Literal level (Why do the leaves turn red and yellow in the fall?)

- Interpretive level (Why do you think it needs water?)

- Applied level (How much water are you going to give it? Why?)

**1.1.2.5.3-No Matter what the Students' Proficiency Level, ask Questions that require higher-level thinking**: To probe for true comprehension, ask questions that require students to analyze, interpret, or explain what they have read, such as the following:
What ideas can you add to...?

Do you agree? Why or why not?

What might happen if...?

How do you think she felt...?

1.1.2.5.4-Use Graphic Organizers: Graphic organizers allow ELLs to organize information and ideas efficiently without using much language. Different types include Venn diagrams, K-W-L charts, story maps, cause-and-effect charts, and time lines.

1.1.2.5.5-Provide Students with many Different Ways to Show what they Know: Drawings, graphs, oral interviews, posters, and portfolios are just a few ways that students can demonstrate understanding as they are beginning to develop their reading and writing skills in English.

1.1.2.6-Summarize: Ask students to use the following strategies to summarize, orally or in writing, what they have read:

- Retell what you read, but keep it short.

- Include only important information.

- Leave out less important details.

- Use key words from the text. It may be challenging to improve ELLs' comprehension skills, but it is well worth the extra effort to put them on the path to becoming successful readers.
SECTION THREE

1.1.3-The Relationship between Comprehension (lesson comprehension) and Interaction (Peer Interaction)

1.1.3.1. Introduction

There are substantial theoretical and empirical grounds for believing that opportunities to negotiate meaning through interaction facilitate comprehension. However, although there are theoretical grounds for believing that meaning negotiation aids foreign language acquisition, these are not supported by enough empirical evidence. There is a study through an article that reports two classroom studies, based on the same design, which investigated the effects of modified interaction on comprehension and vocabulary acquisition among 79 and 127 high-school students of English in Japan. The main results were: (a) interactionally modified input resulted in better comprehension than premodified input, (b) interactionally modified input led to more new words being acquired than premodified input, (c) learners who actively participated in negotiating meaning did not understand any better than those simply exposed to modified interaction, and (d) the active participators did not learn more new words. These results are discussed in terms of the interaction hypothesis (Long, 1981). The dual-study method in classroom research is a useful way of establishing which results are generalizable and which are subject to situational variation (Long, 1983).

In recent years, much second language research has been directed toward the study of input comprehension. This has been motivated by the belief that the learner’s exposure to a target language is not in itself a sufficient condition for second language acquisition. From Corder’s (1967) early claims to Krashen’s (1985) current Input Hypothesis, there has been a widespread conviction that input must be comprehended by the learner if it is to assist the
acquisition process. Current second language acquisition research has tried to identify what it is that makes input comprehensible to the learner.

Concerning reading comprehension, interactions around texts for purposes of reading comprehension occur frequently in school classrooms. These interactions are dominated by teachers who determine the structure, flow, and questions asked about the meanings in the text. Such reading comprehension interactions display both a pedagogical structure, with the teacher ‘teaching for comprehension’, and a conversational structure, with participants interacting and conversing about the text. The focus is on the conversational dimensions of such interactions. The purpose is to use current methods of conversation analysis to analyse a typical interaction in order to understand how the use of conversational techniques support reading comprehension. It explores how communicative activity plays out in terms of conversational features such as sequence organisation, response preferences, and repair actions. Findings indicates that specific communicative actions work towards comprehension outcomes, and that these reflect the authenticity of each interaction sequence. Findings are discussed in terms of interaction theory and the implications for the facilitation of reading comprehension.

Interaction has often been shown to have a positive effect on nonnative speakers' (NNS) comprehension of their second language (L2). Based on the fact that interaction gives learners an opportunity to modify their speech upon a signal of noncomprehension, it should also have a positive effect on native speakers' (NS) comprehension of NNSs. However, in a 1994 study, Gass and Varonis did not find that interaction led to better comprehension of NNSs by NSs in an information gap task. Because such a result has important implications for theory and practice, the study attempted to replicate results. Thirty dyads performed an information gap activity with and without interaction. The results show that interaction does indeed help NSs comprehend NNSs.
The interaction of graph skills, format, and familiarity suggests the possibility that in some cases, graph skills may actually lead to greater effects of format rather than lesser effects of format and is inconsistent with interactive models that predict high skills correspond to less reliance on presentation format. It is possible, that high graph skilled viewers may actually differentiate between formats based on their graph schemas, which include knowledge about what kinds of formats convey specific types of data. An alternative, perhaps less interesting, explanation is that even the high-skilled participants in the sample did not have knowledge to compute main effects from line graphs or that the format did not induce them to think that main effects were important in these graphs, but only could or were inclined to do so from bar graphs. It is acknowledge that it is difficult to draw strong conclusions about the nature of display and skill interactions and that our results differ from other work showing greater effects of display type for novices. Nonetheless, it is possible that skill may sometimes correspond to greater differentiation between formats rather than less differentiation between formats. If so, this differentiation should most likely occur for open-ended tasks in which viewers are selecting what they consider to be the important information and using their knowledge about format to make such judgments. If viewers were asked to answer specific fact-retrieval questions, it is possible that high-skilled graph viewers may be more likely to do so regardless of format.

A second main result of this study is that the bottom-up features of line graphs and bar graphs have a substantial influence on viewers’ interpretations of data, including the nature of their inferences. In our study, viewers were more likely to describe $z\sim y$ interactions when viewing bar graphs than when viewing line graphs, and they were more likely to describe $x\sim y$ interactions when viewing line graphs than when viewing bar graphs. The difference between
focus on x-y and z-y interaction descriptions was greater for line graphs than for bar graphs. Finally, viewers were also more likely to make main effects inferences for bar graphs than for line graphs. The differences between bar graphs and line graphs can be explained by differences in the visual chunks formed by the graphs as predicted by Gestalt principles of proximity, similarity, and good continuity.

Broadely talking, the main link between peer interaction and lesson comprehension is looking from the wide side in that ; the link is between interaction and comprehension with thier different types. The relationship is a viceversa relationship ;ie :comprehension effects interaction and in the other hand interaction makes a deal with comprehension. The relationship may also be effective or negative according to really important factors like classroom observation and classroom management. (Lowe, 1993).

1.1.3.3-Classroom Observation

It is agreed on a definition that classroom observation is a formal or informal observation of teaching while it is taking place in a classroom or other learning environment. Typically conducted by fellow teachers, administrators, or instructional specialists, classroom observations are often used to provide teachers with constructive critical feedback aimed at improving their classroom management and instructional techniques. More importantly, Classroom observations may be called learning walks, teacher observations, walkthroughs, and many other things, and they may be conducted for shorter or longer periods of time—from a few minutes to a full class period or school day.

1.1.3.4-Classroom Management

It is agreed that teachers and managers define as the process by which teachers and schools create and maintain appropriate behavior of students in classroom settings. The purpose of implementing classroom management strategies is to enhance prosocial behavior
and increase student academic engagement (Emmer & Sabornie, 2015; Everston & Weinstein, 2006).

It is also used as an effective classroom interaction which its principles work across almost all subject areas and grade levels (Brophy, 2006; Lewis, et al., 2006). When using a tiered model in which school-wide support is provided at the universal level, classroom behavior management programs have shown to be effective for 80-85 percent of all students. More intensive programs may be needed for some students is concerned with :

- Establishes and sustains an orderly environment in the classroom.
- Increases meaningful academic learning and facilitates social and emotional growth.
- Decreases negative behaviors and increases time spent academically engaged.

To emphasize more, interaction may appear unconsciously or without planning from the guidor. It may occur in classrooms only as a way to comprehend or to fill in missing gaps such, ideas or more information. Maybe in this way it may cause chaos inside the classroom while peer interaction may not. It is an affective process that is followed by students to figure solutions or as a treatment of both student and teacher:

For teacher, it help him to do an eziest job or a better way of well session

For students, it may be as a better way of grassping ideas in asking and feeling at ease with each other in asking for details regarding the idea that the student picks up the person they seat next to or share ideas with.

Comprehension inside class depends on the way the teacher gives or explains the lesson, but in some cases students face a problem in understanding things or getting used to, so they need to be guided by a person who is familliar to them. In this case, peer interaction appears in a hidden way but most effective.
1.1.4. Conclusion

In conclusion, the chapters mentioned before are sub-divisions from the theme itself. In the beginning it deals with the definition of the peer interaction and some strategies to equip a better learning atmosphere, and other problems to deal with during using this method. Furthermore, it deals with the concept of comprehension as a whole and lesson comprehension in a specific way with some definitions and concepts related to it. In general, the main aim is to reach the relation between the two concepts of lesson comprehension and peer interaction.
Chapter Two

Field work

Teachers’ Questionnaire

Introduction

The following work attempt to verify the teacher’s perspective towards the use of peer interaction in comparison to lesson comprehension, their perspective towards such method, and their suggestions or justification concerning the amount of this strategy to be during class. A questionnaire was made from three parts in addition to further suggestions in order to get all the needed data to be analyzed in concurrence to achieve the goal of raising the awareness of teachers to such motivational and enjoyable strategies to students, in order to be more practiced inside the classroom more and more for the sake of fulfill the needed equipments to transfer the informations from the teacher to the learner, as well as to achieve total participation inside the classroom.

2.1. Aim of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire aims at investigating EFL teachers’ attitudes towards peer interaction. It also aims to identify their perception towards using such strategy as a way to enhance students’ lesson comprehension.

2.2. Description of the Questionnaire

The teachers’ questionnaire is made up of 15 questions. The researcher devided his questionnaire into four sections, each focusing on a particular aspect. Furthermore, there are closed and open ended questions in which teachers are asked to answer by yes-no/tick the
appropriate answer from a set of options or give their personal opinion or background information about the topic.

2.2.1. Section One: Background Information (Q1-Q2)

This section which contains two questions is meant to get background information about teachers. So, the first question aims at gathering data about the teachers in terms of their degree. The second question is about the teachers’ teaching experience.
2.2.2. Section Two : Teachers Attitudes towards Peer Interaction (Q3-Q9).

The main aim behind this section is to investigate the teachers’ attitudes towards peer interaction. The first question in this section is about how teachers consider peer interaction during lesson. In the next question, teachers are asked whether or not it is possible to get all students participate in the classroom. In the following question, they are required to state whether peer interaction is more effective comparing it with classroom interaction and to justify their answers. Then, in another question, whether students enjoy learner-learner interaction.

2.2.3. Section Three : Using Peer Interaction to Enhance Lesson Comprehension (Q9-Q15)

This section is designed to explore teachers’ perception towards the use of peer interaction. The first question is about how teacherS evaluate their students’ comprehension level after every lesson. Then, they are asked to state type of speaking activities they rely on. In the next question, teachers are asked if students feel at ease asking the person sitting besides them. The last question it seeks information concerning other factors that makes students feel more comfortable during class.

2.2.4. Section Four : Further Suggestions

This section contains only one question. Here teachers were asked to give any kind of suggestions or comments concerning the study under investigation.

2.4. Administration of the Questionnaire

Our target population consists of all teachers in the English Department at Larbi Ben M’Hidi University. This questionnaire is administrated to 30 teachers. This is mainly based on the consideration that those teachers have different experiences in the teaching process that benefit us and give us relevant information concerning our topic.
2.5. Analysis of the Teacher’s Questionnaire

2.6.1. Section One: Background Information

Q1. Degree Held
Table 01. Teachers’ Academic Degree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree held</th>
<th>License</th>
<th>Master</th>
<th>Magister</th>
<th>Doctorate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>13.33%</td>
<td>36.67%</td>
<td>36.67%</td>
<td>13.33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the table shows, the majority of respondents have Master and Magister degree, with 36.67% for each. In the second position come those who have Lisence and PHD, with 13.33% for each. This means that the sample is considered as representative as possible, taking into account that varying degrees means different information.
Q2. How long have you been teaching?

Table 02. Teachers’ teaching experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Less than 5 years</th>
<th>More than 5 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results show that 60% of the respondents have experienced teaching for more than 05 years. So their responses will be of great importance. We can notice that 40% of the respondents have less than 05 years of experience in the field of teaching. Despite their little experience, they could benefit us and provide more reliable information concerning our topic.
Section Two: Teachers’ Attitudes Towards Peer Interaction

Q3. How do you consider peer interaction inside the EFL classroom?

Table 03. Teachers’ Attitudes towards Peer Interaction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very positive</th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Negative</th>
<th>Very negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>46.66%</td>
<td>26.67%</td>
<td>6.67%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3: Teachers’ Attitudes towards Peer Interaction

The majority of teachers (46.66%) agreed that peer interaction inside the classroom has a positive, 46.66% to be precise, 26.67% of teachers stayed neutral having no comment on that maybe because of unfamiliarity with peer interaction or lack of practice. The rest of teachers with a small percentage (6.67%) assumed that peer interaction has a negative effect inside the
EFL classroom, while no teacher has declared that it has a very negative effect on EFL for reasons. From this question, we can see that it has mostly positive effect on EFL classroom.

Q4 : Is it possible to make all the students participate in the classroom ?

**Table 04. Participation in Classroom**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>36.7%</td>
<td>63.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Figure 04: Participation in the Classroom](image)

The results of table four show that 36.7% have answered positively in that they can make all students participate in the classroom. However the majority of teachers 63.3% have answered negatively assuming that they cannot make all members of the classroom participate taking into consideration that some students will not raise their hands to answer or
to participate. From this question most teachers agreed that there is no way to encourage the whole class to participate ignoring that with peer interaction you can manage that from their justifications to that question which is almost the same justification.

Q5. Do you think that Peer interaction is more effective than classroom interaction?

TABLE05. The Effectiveness of Peer Interaction Compared to Classroom Interaction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 05: The Effectiveness of Peer Interaction Compared to Classroom Interaction

This question is designed to get information about whether or not peer interaction is more effective than classroom interaction. Half of them represented by 50% answered with «yes». The other half stated that interaction is not more effective than classroom interaction. In their
justification, teachers pointed out the advantages of both classroom and peer interaction (e.g., the role of those strategies)

Q6. Do you allow peer interaction inside the classroom?

Table 06. Teachers allowing Peer Interaction inside the Classroom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 06: Teachers allowing Peer Interaction inside the Classroom

In this question, teachers are required to say whether they allow peer interaction inside the EFL classroom. The results show that almost all teachers (90%) agreed that they apply peer interaction inside the classroom referring to it as a way that enhances learner’s comprehension inside the classroom. This indicates that the majority of the teachers are aware about the
necessity of using peer interaction to enhance the level of comprehension on the part of students. 10% of the teachers stated that they do not allow peer interaction inside classroom which contribute to creating a noisy atmosphere.

Q7. Does teachers materials that generate peer interaction?

Table 07. Teachers’ Use of Materials that Generate Peer Interaction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>86.7%</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 07: Teachers’ Use of Materials that Generate Peer Interaction
In this item, teachers whose answer to the previous question was « yes », are asked to state whether or not they use materials that generate peer interaction. From the results obtained from table 07, we see that the great portion of our sample (86.7%) stated that they use materials to generate peer interaction. 13.3% of the respondents answered with « no ». We can interpret those results by saying that some teachers are aware of the qualities of peer interaction? That is why they are concerned with using materials that generate it in order to enhance this strategy.

Q08. What is the amount of peer interaction used in the classroom?

Table 08. Amount of Peer Interaction used in the Classroom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very little</th>
<th>Little</th>
<th>Much</th>
<th>Very much</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>percentage</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>46.7%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Pie Chart](image)
From the table 08, we notice that more than half of the respondents (16.7%+46.7%) declared that the amount of peer interaction to be used is very little and little respectively. 33.3% and 3.3% of the respondents use it much and very much, respectively. Even with these different answers, we can say that teachers are aware about the importance of peer interaction, and they know that it should be there in the EFL classroom to provide things, such as concentration, comprehension, and organization which are basic elements of lesson comprehension.

Q9 : Do students enjoy learner-learner interaction?

Table 09. Students enjoying Learner-learner Interaction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>86.7%</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We notice that the majority of our sample (86.7%) stated that students enjoy learner-learner interaction. In the justifications given by teachers, they assumed that the students feel more comfortable when interacting with each other, sharing ideas, giving their opinions to each other and so on. This is also a clear indication that the students find this type of interaction as the best because they can speak freely in the classroom. Furthermore, the students feel more motivated when applying this type of interaction.

Section Three : Using Peer Interaction to Enhance Lesson Comprehension

Q10 : Do you give your students opportunities to talk ?

Table 10. Teachers giving Students the Opportunity to Speak in the Classroom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

35
| Percentage | 93.3% | 6.7% |

Figure 10: Teachers giving Students the Opportunity to Speak in the Classroom

From the teachers’ responses, we can see that the majority of teachers (93.3%) give opportunities to their students to speak in the classroom in order to make them more interactive because the learners are considered as the central part in the learning process. This indicates that teachers really want their students to be involved in the learning process, since it affects the level of lesson comprehension.

Q11. How do you evaluate your students’ comprehension after every lesson?
Table 11. Teachers’ Perception of Students’ Level of Comprehension

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very poor</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Very good</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>43.3%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>13.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 11: Teachers’ Perception of Students’ Level of Comprehension

This item is designed in order to have an idea about students’ level of comprehension where teachers are required to describe their students’ level. From the table 11, it seems that 43.3% considered that their students have an average level. 30% of the respondents stated that their students are good in terms of comprehension. Others considered that students’ level concerning their comprehension is poor and very good with a percentage of 13.3% and 13.4%, respectively. However, no one has opted for very poor. From these results, we can say that a considerable portion of the students have an average level.
Q12. In your session, what type of speaking activity you relay on?

From the teachers’ answers to this question, we can notice that they use various speaking activities. Indeed, most of them opt for classroom discussions in which students are given different topics to discuss, which help students to enrich their background knowledge, improve fluency, and gain understanding in areas of difficulty. Others use debates in some topics that help learners to exchange ideas in a civilized and practical way. However, other teachers did not specify the type of speaking activity, and they said that it depends on the nature of the module, the lessons and level of the students. All in all, teachers rely on these types of speaking activities may be because they have noticed that giving students an opportunity to be engaged in an interactive activity will lead them to interact and practice the speaking skill inside the classroom since the learners do not interact in English outside the classroom.

Q13. How much comprehension using peer interaction?

Table 13. Gaining Comprehension using Peer Interaction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>83.3%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 13: Gaining Comprehension using Peer Interaction

From table 13, we notice that the majority of the respondents (83.3%) agreed upon the fact that much comprehension is reached using peer interaction. They justified their answer by referring to the role of background knowledge and how this can ensure comprehension, in addition to the ability to exchange ideas and information while engaged in peer interaction. On the other hand, 16.7% of our sample admit that using peer interaction would not lead to better comprehension. This maybe due to the fact that peer interaction is one way to enhance lesson comprehension.

Q15: Do students feel at ease asking the person sitting besides them?

Table 15. Students’ Feeling when Interacting with Others

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>86.7%</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section Four: Further Suggestions

In this section, respondents did not answer the question or give any suggestions to better guide the work, or any advice that can be an addition to the work.

1.6. Discussion

The obtained results from the questionnaire of the teachers at the English Department revealed peer interaction as a positive way in the EFL classroom. On the other hand, from
teachers’ experience most teachers stated that they can not achieve total participation inside the classroom, and others answered that classroom interaction can not be compared with peer interaction considering that peer interaction is not equally as affective as classroom interaction. In other questions about the evaluation of student’s comprehension teachers answered that they are average, after that they replied to the question of much comprehension is reached using peer interaction answering mostly with a positive answer. Teachers believe that peer interaction is important as classroom interaction but they are not aware of the qualities as a great method to enhance lesson comprehension.

1.7. Conclusion

This chapter presented the methodology used in addition to the data collection tool (the teachers’ questionnaire) to investigate teachers’ perception towards the role of peer interaction in enhancing lesson comprehension. The results from teachers’ questionnaire have revealed that peer interaction is an important strategy that the teachers should follow in order to enhance student’s lesson comprehension. The analysis of the questionnaire fullfiled the missing points such as comprehension and participation of the EFL learners, ie; peer interaction plays an important role in making students more aware of improving their speaking abilities in classroom. These results also have shown that peer interaction did not depend only on the students themselves, but also it depends on the teachers’ use of some effective teaching strategies that will make all the students participate as a way to enhance their speaking proficiency, so peer interaction with all opportunities it offers can stand as a key for both students and teachers in the learning teaching process.
General Conclusion

This study aims at investigating EFL teachers’ attitudes, at the english departement, towards the use of peer interaction in enhancing lesson comprehension. The present research contains two chapters. The first is about the review of related literature. As for the second, it is about the practical part.

The obtained data revealed that learner-learner interaction has a positive relationship with the learners’ level of comprehension and participation, and it is considered as a key factor in improving the learner proficiency.

The present study signifies that peer interaction plays an important role in developing the learner’s skills and it is important as classroom interaction regarding their same qualities and advantages. The current research also asserts that learners enjoy learner-learner interaction since classroom is the only place and setting where they can practice and improve their language.

Therefore, as a research requirement, we have suggested some implications which aim to show the great importance of peer interaction and to make EFL teachers aware of its significance. The suggestions were designed for both learners and teachers.

Some teachers didn’t justify their answers, and others they didn’t answer open ended question they only pick the right box.

Researchers can take a next step to maximize the reaserches to apply peer anteraction more in EFL classrooms reach the limits to the total comprehension.
List of references


Dear teacher,

This questionnaire is an attempt to gather data needed for the accomplishment of a Master degree in didactics. It aims to investigate Teachers’ Attitude Towards the Effect of Peer Interaction on EFL Students’ Comprehension of Lessons. It would be very kind of you if you could answer the following questions as this only will guarantee the success of the investigation. Please, tick the right box (es) and provide full statements if it is possible.

Thank you very much for your time and collaboration.

Mr. Bouzid Badreddine

Department of English

Faculty of Letters and Foreign Languages

Larbi Ben M’Hidi University, Oum-El-Bouaghi

Section One: General Information

1. Degree held:
   a. Licence □
   b. Master □
   c. Magister □
   d. Doctorate □

2. How long have you been teaching at university?
   a. Less than 5 years □
   b. More than 5 years □

Section Two: Teachers’ Attitudes towards Peer Interaction

3. How do you consider peer interaction inside the EFL classroom?
   a. Very positive □
   b. Positive □
   c. Neutral □
   d. Negative □
   e. Very negative □

4. From your experience as a teacher, is it possible to make all the students participate in the classroom? Please explain.

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5. Do you think that peer interaction is more effective than classroom interaction?
   a. Yes □  b. No □

   Please justify

6. Do you allow peer interaction in the classroom?
   a. Yes □  b. No □

7. If ‘Yes’, do you use teaching materials that generate peer interaction?
   a. Yes □  b. No □

8. What is the amount of peer interaction to be used in the EFL classroom?
   a. Verry little □  b. Little □
   c. Much □  d. Verry much □

9. When allowing peer interaction, do students enjoy the learner-learner interaction?

   Please explain

Section Three: Using Peer Interaction to Enhance Lesson Comprehension

10. Do you give opportunities to your students to speak in the classroom?
    a. Yes □  b. No □

11. How do you evaluate your student’s comprehension after every lesson?
    a. Verry poor □
    b. Poor □
    c. Average □
    d. Good □
    e. Verry good □
12. In your session, what type of speaking activities do you rely on?
Please justify

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13. Do you think that much comprehension is reached using peer interaction?
   a. Yes  □   b. No  □

14. Please justify
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15. Do you agree that students feel at ease asking the person sitting beside them?
   a. Agree  □   b. Disagree  □

16. Other reasons
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Section Four: Further Suggestions
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ملخص

تهدف الدراسة الحالية إلى التحقق من إدراك المعلمين لدور التفاعل بين الأقران في تعزيز اللغة الإنجليزية كمستوعب للدرس لدى المتعلمين في توضيح الفرضية الأساسية لهذه الدراسة أن اتجاه المعلمين نحو تأثير تفاعل الأقران على فهم الطلاب للغة الإنجليزية ككلة أجنبية. من أجل التحقق من صحة فرضية، تم تطبيق طريقة tested لغة الإنجليزية في جامعة أم البواقي ووصفية تم جمع البيانات من استبيان تم إدارته إلى ثلاثين مدرسة. وكشفت نتائج استبيان المعلمين عن أن المعلمين يعتبرون التفاعل بين الأقران استراتيجية هامة ينبغي استخدامها لتثبيت فهم المتعلمين.

وبالتالي، يتم تأكيد الفرضية المذكورة.
Résumé

La présente étude vise à étudier la perception des enseignants à l'égard du rôle de l'interaction entre pairs dans l'amélioration de la compréhension de l'anglais en tant qu'apprenants Foreign Language. L'hypothèse de base de cette étude établit que l'attitude des enseignants envers l'effet de l'interaction des pairs sur la compréhension des élèves EFL des leçons. Afin de vérifier la validité de l'hypothèse testée, une méthode descriptive a été appliquée. Les données ont été recueillies à partir d'un questionnaire administré à trente enseignants d'anglais à l'Université Oum EL Bouaghi. Les résultats du questionnaire des enseignants ont révélé que les enseignants considèrent l'interaction entre pairs comme une stratégie importante qui devrait être utilisée pour améliorer la compréhension des apprenants. Ainsi, l'hypothèse énoncée est confirmée.