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The Effect of Cooperative Learning Strategies in the Enhancement of EFL Learners' Speaking Skills

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Abstract

This paper aims to investigate the effect of cooperative learning strategies based on multiple intelligence on enhancing EFL learner's communication skills. 48 learners are used in this study, experimental and controlled groups. They were all freshmen students from foundation year in Faculty of Education at Tishk International University, Erbil, KRG-Iraq.

Both groups were under the experiment study for 15 academic weeks in the 2018-2019 academic year in the spring semester. The tool for collecting data was through pre and post-test speaking strategies for both experimental and controlled groups to see the progress of learners speaking skills during the academic semester. The participants recorded scores from pre-test and post-test of both groups were verified and analyzed. The results revealed that cooperative strategies based on multiple intelligence have an enormous significant effect on improving learners speaking skills. The study has also suggested some recommendations and submissions for additional research.

Keywords: *Cooperative learning, multiple intelligence, speaking skills, language teaching.*

Introduction

After the tremendous advances in science and technology, the life of human beings has changed dramatically. Consequently, English has become a global language and means of communication among speakers of different languages and cultures (Alzebaree & Yavuz, 2017, as cited in Alzebaree & Hasan, 2020; Alrefae & Al-Ghamdi, 2019; Aliyu, Yong, Md Rashid, & Nimehchisalem, 2020). For more than two thousand years, different civilizations have been interested in discussing the existence of mental capabilities and it is important, and with the advancement of psychology, a huge number of human capabilities were unveiled, which led to an increased desire to learn more about the human mind and its capabilities. Does the human mind act as one whole unit or as a system of intellectual energies? The answer to this question has been widely debated among scholars for centuries.

However, with the development of the world and the spread of fast cultivation, learners need to cooperate helpfully, and work towards reaching communal goals. Therefore, many researchers, scholars and educators called for a change in the field of education, and everyone stressed the need for teaching methods with a critical and cooperative idea in order to help learners to solve difficult problems., And critically seeing the conditions around them, finding alternatives, insights, and deep ideas.

Therefore, cooperative learning groups in the field of teaching the English language in general or in the field of teaching oral communication skills in particular are considered ways that the teacher can find interaction among all students in order for everyone to benefit. When students interact and participate in cooperative working groups, they learn how to send and

receive information in English, they develop cooperative understanding and visions, and they can also communicate in an acceptable social way.

Furthermore, English language learning has become a very crucial skill from all around the globe. Beside learning the English language, it needs practice and usage to be conquered. Speaking the English language counted as one of the most vital skills especially in the academic area. Speaking skills are one of the major and impactful skills for communication in any language, especially when they are not using their first language. This ability is used orally in language and a mediocre within which people communicate with each other. Harmer (Harmer,2008) stated that EFL language learners are putting all their efforts while they use the language. In addition, one of the important skills that enable language learners to communicate and expressing viewpoints also giving responses (Richards, 2008).

As one of the crucial topics that have been considered in the past forty years was involving in English communication classes and it is learning motivation theories. According to (Pattanapichet & Chinaokul, 2011) speaking the English language is one of the important characters in the professional world. The elder teaching second language methods were summarized on the teacher's explanation of vocabulary, grammar and other language structures that they were in the course books. That was one of the reasons when students could not understand the language and learn it quickly.

In this study the researcher tries to state and show the effects of cooperative learning strategies which they are based on multiple intelligence domains to help learners develop their oral communication skills. Creating MI centers and cooperative learning strategies have a crucial impact on students' communication and oral accuracy in using language. One of the delighted point which can help students to express themselves in an effective way is to know their MI domain. By knowing their MI domain and putting students in those centres they can collaborate and help each other to develop their fluency, accuracy and speaking skills. After studying English language in school level for more than ten years especially in public schools' students have ineffective speaking skills. Despite all the help of the KRG reforms to help the education system, they could not find a proper solution for it.

The gigantic problems in EFL classrooms are mostly teacher-centered classes, instead of cooperation, there are many competitions between learners, educators are not familiar with the cooperative learning techniques in language teaching settings particularly when it comes to teaching speaking, and learners' lack of background knowledge in language learning skills.

“Taking everything into account Cooperative learning is of great effect on developing students speaking skills” (Liao, 2009; Pattanpichet, 2011).

Kemala (2018) stated that “The linguistic knowledge is often referred to discourse knowledge, speech act knowledge, and knowledge of grammar, vocabulary and phonology. Each component has a different level for the individual student in their speaking performance. Those who have adequate knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, and phonology will develop their capability in speech act knowledge and discourse knowledge”.

Purpose of the study

This paper aims to show the effect of cooperative language learning based on multiple intelligence to develop learners speaking skills at Tishk International University, faculty of the education foundation year. The research examines the effect of cooperative learning to enhance foundation learners in the faculty of education at Tishk International University.

Research questions

This research is an attempt to study the effect of the use of cooperative learning strategies based on multiple intelligence domains in order to develop oral communication skills for students at the freshmen level in the Faculty of Education, Tishk International University. That is why this research project attempts to answer the next questions.

- a) Are there any differences between the control group and experimental group pre-test speaking skills strategies test?
- b) Are there any differences between the control group and experimental group post-speaking skills strategies test?
- c) Are there any significant differences between pre-test results and post-test results in the experimental group?

Literature review

The progression of learning a second language entails mostly the mastery of its skills. There are numerous definitions of speaking in literature. According to Cameron (2001, 46) in order to understand others, speaking will be a crucial element to direct meaning to people. However, transferring information from speakers to listeners is called speaking. Clark and Clark (1977, 272) mention that in speaking people put ideas into words, talking about insight, emotions, and purpose in their speaking. They want to make themselves clear to other people

who they talk to. They like to exchange knowledge and information with each other through oral communication. Johnson and Morrow (1981, 70) augment that “speaking is an activity involving two or more people in which the speaker and listener have to react to what they hear and make their contributions at speed of high level”. Each contributor speaking has a persistence that both of them (she/he) want to achieve. Brown and Yule (1989, 26) “state that speaking is the way to express the need-request, information, service, etc.”

Thornberry (2005, 20) mentioned that to interact with listeners speakers need to carry out their ideas by speaking, which it’s a vital activity in his/her real life. Another definition comes from Cameron (2001, 40). “She says that speaking is about making people understand speaker’s feeling and ideas by doing an act of communication using language. At the time people produce utterances, they deliver their meanings, feelings, ideas and desires”. Additionally, Kayi (2006, 1) says that “speaking is the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-verbal in a variety of context”.

Speaking is an important part of language learning and teaching curriculum (Luoma, 2004). It is the vital language learning skill to be gained when learners wish to interact with each other orally. In addition, speaking requires more than understanding its grammatical and semantical rules. “Students must also acquire the knowledge of how native speakers use the language in the context of structured interpersonal exchange” (Shumin, 2002). Communication with a foreign language is most difficult for second language learners because effecting communicating needs the capacity to use language suitably. From the investigation above, to do speak well learners should be able to communicate. Through speaking, learners will have the ability to express their opinion, beliefs, and thought easily and impulsively.

One of the productive skills is speaking, which is very important for language learners. As mentioned by Ku. nierek (2015), “speaking and writing are classified as productive skills. Listening and reading, on the other hand, involve receiving messages, and therefore, they are identified as receptive skills”. Nevertheless, in the usage of language, some skills are more focused on than the others in language teaching. In communication, students apply the language verbally. The students who can use the language verbally well will be identified as a good language learner. That is why speaking become one of the vital productive language learning skill and it has its own priority in language teaching.

There are large numbers of researches which they try to classify the purposes of speaking in human communication. Brown and Yule (1983) stated “the useful distinction between the interactional functions of speaking, in which it serves to establish and maintain

social relation, and the transactional functions, which focus on the exchange of information”. “There are three-part versions of Brown and Yule’s framework: talk as interaction, talk as transaction and talk as performance” (Richards, 2008). Each of these discourse activities was different from each other in terms of procedure, meaning and essential different teaching approaches. Students cannot make interaction verbally in their settings in oral mood unless they master speaking skills.

Multiple Intelligence and Speaking Skills Previous Researches.

Various studies have been conducted recently to find out the numerous effects of multiple intelligences on students speaking skill performance in different places around the globe.

Sayed (2005) investigated the impact of applying MI theory on improving first year learners verbal communication skills. 30 freshmen English major learners were the sample of his research. a teaching curriculum based on Howard Gardner’s MI theory to improve learners speaking skills have done, and a pre-speaking test and post-speaking test were administrated to the group of students as the tools of the study. the findings of the study showed that the program has a positive impact on the student’s verbal communication skills as there were statically momentous variances among pre and post-tests.

Moreover, Salem (2013) conducted research on the effects of MI theory-based instruction on improving the communication skills of the senior students at the English department. Consequently, his study’s problem was the lack of senior student’s verbal communication in Hurgada Faculty of Education, South Valley University. By focusing on students’ various abilities, the researcher adopted a multiple intelligence-based programs to develop students speaking skills. the population of his participants was 64 preservice students in one group. His research design was a quasi-experimental research design used for one group pre and post-tests used to assess the impact of smearing this great method. Findings from the paper proved the helpfulness of MI teaching on enhancing learner’s communication skills.

Thus, another research investigated the connection between MI theory and oral fluency among intermediate EFL students in Bandar Abbas Azad University in Iran by (Saibani & Simin 2015), this paper was conducted to find the relationship between MI and verbal communication skills among Iranian learners. The results of the paper discovered that MI theory instruction has a significant impact on enhancing learners speaking skills.

Although, Giannikas (2019) investigated the impact of multiple intelligences to enhance adult language learners speaking skills in an action research. The participants of the

research were foreigners who moved to the UK for academic and professional purposes. The majority of EFL learners familiarized with a teacher-centred classroom. The instructions based on multiple intelligences used to involve students to more students-centre environment. The article reveals the importance effects of multiple intelligence-based instructions on EFL learners speaking skills.

Grounded on the testimonies above, the researcher proposed the procedure of teaching communication through cooperative learning and MI theory to develop student's oral fluency can be a better way to create a student-centered classroom. However, it could solve the problem of lack of interactions between learners in classroom. Moreover, students can exposure to the language more in case where they can find cooperative learning between them and perform better to learn the English language.

The Concept of Multiple Intelligence

Intelligence theories and assessments have been focused on reasoning and problem-solving function for decades. The perceptions of the process of reasoning and the manner in which cognitive variables interfere with abilities has not received equal attention. In 1983 through his book *Frame of Minds*, Howard Gardener very last introduced his Multiple Intelligence theory. Gardner claimed as Armstrong (2009) said, that human cognitive ability is called intelligences rather than talents or skills.

“According to Gardner intelligence, is the ability to solve problems or fashion products that are valued in at least one community and culture is a biopsychological information processing capability. In other words, intelligence is a cognitive capacity that initiates in human biology and psychology-a ability to process a certain type of information.”

Gardner challenged the nature of a single intelligence throughout the project Zero testimony and stated to investigate the possibility of several different intelligences. When a teacher knows the nine intelligences, they will be able to do the next step, recognizing their students ' intelligence strengths. The instructor then reflects on the powerful intelligences and teaches new materials with these abilities. Research have shown that teaching by using the combination of multiple intelligences through the abilities of students has many benefits , including satisfying the learning needs of students that can lead to higher student achievements.

“Intelligence is a blend of some capabilities, which there are sorts of it that an individual has. Professor Gardner offered away variety of skills that individuals have by putting them into

following eight inclusive types or “intelligences” such as linguistics, logical-mathematical, spatial, bodily-kinaesthetic, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, naturalist and recently added existential intelligence as the ninth intelligence” (Armstrong, 2009).

Linguistics Intelligence

Linguistic intelligence of those who have this intelligence, they can practice words meritoriously, whether verbally or in the inscription. This domain involves also the ability to influence the composition or configuration of language, the phonology or sounds of language, and the pragmatics scopes or everyday usage of the language. There are also more uses and embraces speech-making (it is a sort of action by persuasive individuals to impression a precise deed), mnemonics (an action by language to aid recall or remembering the memory). (Armstrong, 2009).

Logical-Mathematical Intelligence

“The logical-mathematical intelligence is the capacity to use numbers effectively and to reasoning well. the kinds of processes used in the service of logical-mathematical intelligence include categorization, classification, inference, generalization, calculation, and hypothesis testing.” (Armstrong, 2009).

Spatial Intelligence

The visual intelligence is the capacity to implement renovations upon those observations to identify the optical world precisely. This domain of MI is included compassion among colours, appearances, figures, forms and the integration and sensitivity among previous elements. it also, has the ability to envision, to explicitly exemplify visual or spatial environment. (Armstrong, 2009)

Bodily-Kinaesthetic Intelligence

Individuals who has this domain actively, they are proficiencies in the usage of their whole or parts of their body to share ideas and opinions. “this intelligence includes specific physical skills such as coordination, balance, dexterity, strength, flexibility and speed, as well as pro perspective, tactile and hepatic capacities” (Armstrong, 2009).

Musical Intelligence

The ability to recognize, categorize, convert and express musical form is called musical smart intelligence. This domain is including of rhythm, pitch and sound level of musical section (Armstrong, 2009).

Interpersonal Intelligence

“Interpersonal domain is the capacity to observe and mark differences in the attitudes, intents, motivations, and feeling of other people. This can include sensitivity to facial expression, voice, and gestures; the capacity for discriminating among many different kinds of interpersonal cues; and the ability to respond effectively to those cues in some pragmatic way” (Armstrong, 2009). “Interpersonal activities include: cooperative learning, peer tutoring, community involvement, social gatherings, and simulations” (Armstrong, 2009).

Intrapersonal Intelligence

Intrapersonal smart is self-know and the capacity to performance adaptively on the foundation of that knowledge. this domain involves of having a clear vision of self-knowledge, consciousness of emotions, intension, inspiration, personalities, the ability of self-discipline, self-understanding and self-esteem (Armstrong, 2009).

Naturalist Intelligence

A naturalist shows competence in identifying and classifying the many types (vegetation and wildlife) within an individual setting. This also involves responsiveness to other natural phenomena and, for those growing up in an urban environment, the ability to distinguish between non-living objects such as vehicles, sneakers and CDs (Armstrong, 2009).

Existential Intelligence

“Gardner mentioned that his consummate is a preliminary formulation; some of the intelligences on his list do not meet any of the eight requirements mentioned above after further study and analysis and may therefore no longer qualify as intelligences” (Armstrong, 2009). “Gardner's recognition of a ninth intellect – the psychological – is therefore also based on several of the requirements fulfilled” (Armstrong, 2009).

We all believe that there are individual differences between the learners, which are evident in their physical appearance, in their character and tendencies, and in their hobbies ... as they are evident in their learning patterns. What is meant by the learning style is the method and method that the learner prefers when presenting the academic content to him, and that he learns faster than other methods and methods.

The following table shows the preferred teaching methods of each type of students, the appropriate educational tools for them and the preferred activities:

Table 1 preferred teaching methods according MI domains

| Intelligence | Favourite teaching methods | Teaching materials | Favourite activities |
|-------------------------|---|--|--|
| Verbal | Lecture, discussion, crossword puzzles, storytelling, musical notes reading, CV writing. | Books, tape recorder, printer, stamp sets. Dictionaries, Language learning course books. | Reading, writing, talking, listening |
| Logical - mathematical | Problem solving, scientific experiment, playing with words, word puzzles, collecting numbers in mind, intersecting numbers, critical thinking | Calculator, manual calculations, practical tools, math games, cross word and word puzzle games | Measuring, thinking critically, put it in a logical framework, experiencing things |
| Spatial - visual | Visual presentation, artistic activities, imagination games, mind maps, metaphors, visualization, imagination | Graph, maps, videos, installation games, art tools, visual tricks, cameras, pictures. | Looking at things, drawing, fancy, colours, make a mind map |
| Physical - kinaesthetic | Hand craft learning, acting, dancing, | Jigsaw Puzzles, Playing with Clay, | Train, perform, touch, feel, dance. |

| | | | |
|---------------|---|---|--|
| | physical exercise, tactile activities (touch), relaxation exercises | Sports Tools, Touch Learning Resources. | |
| Musical | Learn the melody, the ways, and use the songs as an educational part. | Tape recorder, tape collector, musical instruments, songs | Singing, knocking, drumming, listening |
| Interpersonal | Cooperative learning, comrades learning, community participation, social gatherings. | The recorder, organizing parties, plays various roles. | Study with people, collaborate with others, interact with others, respect |
| Intrapersonal | Individual instruction, independent self-studies, self-confidence building, self-esteem. | Self-build tools, CV. Diaries, Personal Blogs | Linked to personal life, giving options with reference to it, self-foresight |
| Naturalist | Nature study, environmental awareness, animal care, excursions, tours, experiments, follow-up to natural phenomena. | Plants, animals, nature monitors such as perspectives, fact tools | Follow natural phenomena |

Students think according to their patterns, they love doing activities, and they feel the needs that adequate with these patterns. Each student has his own thinking tool according to his style. The following table 2 shows preferred thinking tools, common approaches and activities and the needs of each style.

Table 2 preferred thinking tools, common approaches and activities and the needs of each style.

| Intelligence | Thinking Style | Favoured activities | Needs |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|---|---|
| Verbal | With words | Reading and writing, telling stories, verbal toys and verbal manipulation | Books, tapes, writing instruments, paper, notes, conversations, discussion, arguments and stories. |
| Logical - mathematical | Logic | Experimentation, enquiry solving puzzles, mathematical operations | Experiences tools, scientific materials, information retrieval, excursions, practical museums |
| Spatial - visual | Pictures, imaginations. | Design, draw, diagnose, induction. | Art, logos, video, movies and slide cinema, fantasy games, maze games, puzzles, picture books, trips to art museums. |
| Physical - kinaesthetic | With sensation | Dancing, running, jumping, building, touching, gesture | Performances, action theatre, building things, sports, and physical games, experiences with the aim of stimulating intelligence, learning |
| Musical | Via poetry and songs | Singing, whistling, tinnitus, knocking with hands and feet, listening | Singing, trips, concerts, playing music in schools and homes, and musical instruments |

| | | | |
|---------------|--|---|---|
| Interpersonal | Retrieving ideas from others | Growth, society, association, participation, gathering, assembly. | Friends, group games, social evenings, community events such as joys and sorrows, clubs |
| Intrapersonal | To relate to their needs, feelings and goals | Setting goals, meditation, dreams, planning, deep planning. | Secret places, isolation, self-projects, options. |
| Naturalist | Across nature and natural patterns. | Playing with pets, farming, nature exploitation, animal husbandry, caring for the earth | Getting to know or staying in nature with animals, tools for discovering nature (example: magnifying glasses and binoculars). |

Cooperative Language Learning

From the beginning of human kind ever, they were collaborating with each other for equivalent determinations to reach their aims. The notion of cooperation has also mentioned in education also. Barfield (2016) defines cooperative learning as “deciding goals together with others, sharing responsibilities, and working together to achieve more than could be achieved by an individual on their own” (p. 1). Cooperation is just not easy grouping works, it also needs abilities to do, take actions and take responsibilities of those results and consequences. In addition, cooperation has the feature of depending on each other’s skills and abilities as it “makes the learners depend on each other in their pursuit of knowledge and makes the learning process more meaningful and interesting” (Ibrahim et al, 2015, p. 1).

Learners will not get bored and isolate when there is cooperative learning work during the classes, and this is a very useful pro of cooperative learning approach. Mostly they feel like they are a part of a wider community by helping each other. One more advantage of cooperative learning is that “whether it be the whole class or a learning group within the class--can accomplish meaningful learning and solve problems better than any individual can alone”(Tinzmann et al, 1990, p. 1). Another advantage of cooperation work is that learners

have the independency of putting objectives, creating activities and monitoring themselves and assessing each other. students moreover “feel more free to express doubts, feelings of success, remaining questions, and uncertainties than when they are evaluated only by a teacher” (Tinzmann et al, 1990, p. 9). When learners work cooperatively they feel fewer nervous and less apprehensive, while they feel free to express all their opinions and thoughts.

Here in this study, the researcher would like to express the effectiveness of cooperative learning work in language teaching classrooms. Furthermore, to develop learner’s oral fluency in speaking skills. By applying this approach in ESL/EFL classrooms students will learn to be more responsible to ward of their goals and work together in a group work task, share their personal opinions and views, and avoiding themselves from isolation and stress in the classroom.

Definitions of Cooperative Learning Approach

Academics have stated different explanations for cooperative learning concept, the following are few of those definitions:

Johnson's definition

Johnson (1991) states: “Cooperative learning is the instructional use of small groups so that students work together to maximize their own and each other's learning. Students exert their effort to have each other information in order to enhance learning.”

Richard’s definition

Richards, (1992) points out that: “Cooperative Learning is an approach to teaching and learning in which classrooms are organized so that students work together in small cooperative teams”.

Elizabeth’s definition

Elizabeth, (2004) concludes that: “Cooperative learning is both a philosophical position and a set of teaching strategies.”

Jordan’s definition

Jordan, (2010) defines CL as follows: “Cooperative learning, an effective educational practice in many situations, has sometimes been proposed as the magic bullet to solve the educational debate.”

From the definitions above it is clear that cooperative learning is fabulous teaching approach that minor groups of learners apply a different learning tasks to develop their

cognitive to a topic. Members of small teams are not only required to learn individually but also responsible to help his co-flowers and collaborating with them to learn better, by using these strategies will assure them they will practice and achieve their goals. In this case, all students are active in their groups no matter of their difference in levels of their abilities. It also helps them to work and produce a mutual product in their working group.

Cooperative Language Teaching Method

Cooperative learning is the procedure of functioning together for the equivalent conclusion. “Cooperative learning is a teaching strategy in which small groups (4-6), each with students of different levels of ability, use a variety of learning activities to improve their own and each other’s learning, while the teacher coaches the process” (Johnson, Johnson & Holubeo, 1994). Kaur (2017) pointed out that “cooperative classrooms represent a shift from traditional lecture-style classrooms to more brain-friendly environments that benefit all learners”.

Research has shown that cooperative learning techniques: (Davis & Murrell, 1994; Philips, Smith& Modaf, 2004).

1. Developing learners learning and academic achievements.
2. Growing learner’s memorizing.
3. Help learners develop abilities in verbal interaction.
4. Help students improve their critical thinking abilities.

“Cooperative learning (CL) first was used to organize group work to aid the understanding and practice of both language and subject content of limited English proficient students in North American settings” (Kagan, 1992, 1995; Kessler, 1992). “It was argued that CL would contribute to language development” (Crandall, 1999; McCafferty, Jacobs & Iddings, 2006). “Cooperative learning has been shown to be beneficial for students across a wide racial, ethnic, socioeconomic and disability spectrum, as well as those from differing academic skill levels” (Millis, 2009; Salend, 2001).

Azmin (2016) investigated “ the effect of the Jigsaw cooperative learning method on student performance in psychology and their views towards it. Experimental data were obtained via pre-and-post tests and open-ended questionnaires from 16 conveniently selected students from college in Brunei ”. The conclusion of this paper showed that learners enjoyed by doing Jigsaw activities in the classroom and achieved highly significant better after the involvement.

Akçay (2016) “studied the implementation of cooperative learning model in pre-school. As a result of the obtained data, it was determined that the cooperative learning model is more effective in teaching the sense organs subject to the children compared to the traditional teaching method”. Tesfamichael (2017) investigated the “students’ attitudes towards cooperative learning in EFL writing class and the findings of this study indicated that the writing lessons in the students’ English textbook should be taught through CL”.

The Connection Between CL and Oral Communication

Many studies have been conducted to investigate the effects of cooperative learning on learners development of speaking skills and performance in tertiary stages. Pattanpichet (2011) conducted an experimental study to investigate the effects of using CL in promoting students’ speaking achievement. The participant of the study were thirty five undergraduate learners. To see the effect of cooperative learning the students from Bangkok University, the pre and post test were conducted to English language learning students. To find out students idea about cooperative language learning the researcher asked learners to fill a diary after completing each task. To investigate the opinions of the learners on the practice of the CL, they were requested to broad a student record after each assignment was done, complete a four-scale survey, and attend a semi-structured interview at the end of the course. The data were analysed by SPSS and applying frequency, mean, standard deviation and t-test to find out the effects of CL. The findings were highly positive and the feedback from student’s diary were also significant to use CL activities for developing speaking skills.

Another experimental research has been done by Ning (2011) to investigate the effect of cooperative learning to develop learners' fluency in communication. The study targeted to suggest learners more chances for language usage and developing their fluency and efficiency in speaking. The results showed a highly significant in students' progress in speaking and communication skills.

Al-Tamimi and Attamimi (2014) studied the impact of CL in improving communication skills and attitudes towards learning English language, the findings carried out an extraordinary improvement in learners’ verbal skills attitudes after the introduction of CL activities.

Method

The Study Design and Objectives

An experimental design is chosen for the study that is the proper design to be used. There are a few different versions of experimental design that have been classified into three categories. The first one is a true experiment that random assignment is followed in a study. The second one is a non-experimental design that no multiple groups or random assignments are used. Third is called quasi-experimental which does not use random assignment but either multiple groups of measurement (Trochim, 2006).

Quasi-experimental design was selected for the study to set the control and experimental groups. There were only two groups involved in the study

Participants and research setting

The main objective of this paper is to find out the effects of cooperative learning strategies based on multiple intelligence grouping in language learning classrooms to enhance freshmen year learners at faculty of education in Tishk International University-Erbil-Iraq communication skills. This study focuses on the usage of cooperative strategies in classroom considering learners intelligence domain to develop their speaking competency. The location of the study was Faculty of Education at Tishk International University in Erbil, Kurdistan Region of Iraq. The research was conducted in the 2018-2019 academic year in Spring semester. The duration of the study was 15 weeks.

The participants of both the trail study and the main study were selected from the freshmen students at Faculty of Education in Tishk International University. In the faculty of education at Tishk International University first grade students will study English language for two academic semesters. All participants native languages were Kurdish and Arabic languages, and they were mostly beginners in English as a foreign language.

Two groups contributed to this research. The Biology Education 1A learners were chosen to be an experimental group for the study, which they were 24 students. And for the control group Physics education 1A learners was chosen to be the control group which they were 24 students. The research was conducted to forty-eight learners (see tab 3).

There were 16 females and 8males in the control group, and there were 17 females and 7males in the experimental group. The information about the distribution of girls and boys in the groups can be examined from the following table 3:

Table 3. Distributions of girls and boys in both groups.

| Groups | Gender | | Total |
|-----------------------------|--------|------|-------|
| | Female | Male | |
| Control Group (PHY-1A) | 16 | 8 | 24 |
| | | | |
| Experimental Group (BIO-1A) | 17 | 7 | 24 |
| | | | |

None of the learners participating in the research were familiar with multiple intelligences or cooperative learning strategies and activities.

Instruments

To gather data from the participants, Pre-test and post-test were conducted that were. The speaking skills test was prepared and adapted according to the IELTS standardized test. The assessment was done by three language teaching scholars which they had a rubric to evaluate learners speaking skills. The rubric was analysing learners' abilities like content, grammar, fluency, pronunciation and comprehension was applied.

Data Analysis

To analyse the gathered data, different tools and programs were used. GraphPad Prism 6,00, and (SPSS) t-test were used to analyse the standardized tests that included pre-tests and post-tests for both experimental and controlled groups.

Findings and Discussions

In this paper, the main goal was to find out the effects of cooperative learning supported by multiple intelligence to enhance ELF learners speaking skills. To get the answer for the research questions and help learners to improve their oral fluency, two groups of participants were chosen, one as control group and the second was as experimental group. The assessment of both groups was like each other. The outcomes of data tools were to see learner's achievement in progressing their verbal competency in language learning. The data had showed us the effect of the cooperative activities which they were applied on groups that they arranged by multiple intelligence domains.

Are there any differences between the control group and the experimental group pre-speaking test?

The participants in the study took a pre- speaking strategies test in both the control and experimental group. They were given a pre-test to see whether they were familiar with the speaking skills learning strategies items or not. At the beginning of the research pre speaking skills test were assessed. Learners speaking skills pre-test were evaluated by three different teachers. Assessors had a rubric that evaluated and analyzed learners skills by content, grammar, fluency, pronunciation and comprehension. Each part of the skills had a maximum score of 20 points, 15 points, 10 points, and 5 points. They were all analysed by SPSS program. The following table 6 will give more information about speakers level in evaluating criteria's:

Table 4 speakers' level in evaluating criteria.

| Scores | Level |
|--------|---------------------|
| 40-49 | Poor speakers |
| 50-59 | Weak speakers |
| 60-69 | Developing speakers |
| 70-79 | Able speakers |
| 80-89 | Good speakers |
| 90-100 | Excellent speakers |

Afterward, weak criteria were focused on by the researcher to improve cooperative strategies based on learners MI domain for speaking skills.

Experimental Group Pre-Test Speaking Results

Table 5. Results of the Pre-Test Speaking Rubric of the Experimental Group

| | Fluency | Pronunciation | Grammar | Comprehension | Vocabulary | Total |
|-----------------------|---------|---------------|---------|---------------|------------|-------|
| <i>Mean</i> | 16.88 | 18.13 | 17.29 | 16.88 | 18.13 | 87.29 |
| <i>Std. Deviation</i> | 2.47 | 2.47 | 2.55 | 2.47 | 2.47 | 6.91 |

Table 5 express's that experimental group was weak for pronunciation and vocabulary components in speaking skills, nevertheless they were successful in fluency, grammar and comprehension. This could tell us that students were not familiar with cooperative learning speaking strategies and activities. This happens due to not have sufficient knowledge of word

organization while communication activities and shortage of enough vocabulary in their English language background. Almost all the time they were active listeners in their previous language learning classes rather than active speakers. They all depended on memorizing vocabulary and not practicing memorized words in daily activities. Students were shy to use their background knowledge to interact with each other in target language.

Scores in table 5 shows that students were weak in speaking, which make pronunciation mistakes and lack of vocabulary. It directs that learners have mistaken in fluency, grammar and comprehension. The reason why students were not motivated to speak in the target language is also discovered in this table. Which tells us that learners' lack of knowledge in target language made them afraid to speak in the target language?

Control Group Pre-Test Speaking Results

Table 6. Results of the Pre-Test Speaking Rubric of the Control Group

| | Fluency | Pronunciation | Grammar | Comprehension | Vocabulary | Total |
|-----------------------|----------------|----------------------|----------------|----------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| <i>Mean</i> | 11.96 | 11.96 | 12.17 | 11.3 | 12.17 | 59.13 |
| <i>Std. Deviation</i> | 2.915 | 2.915 | 3.312 | 2.704 | 3.639 | 11.93 |

From table 6 reveals that learners in control group were also weak in speaking skills in the beginning of the research. Students were got very low scores in speaking pre-test. Students were also lack of speaking components like fluency, pronunciation, grammar, comprehension and vocabulary. Lack of speaking strategies shows us that they were in lack of speaking knowledge that is why learners got low scores in the test. There were also lacking in connecting ideas, vocabulary and body language usage with communication skills. They were as same as experimental group of undetermined in communicating and interacting with each other.

Comparison between Experimental and Control Groups Pre-test speaking assessment.

Figure 1. result of comparing between experimental and control group pre-test speaking assessment.

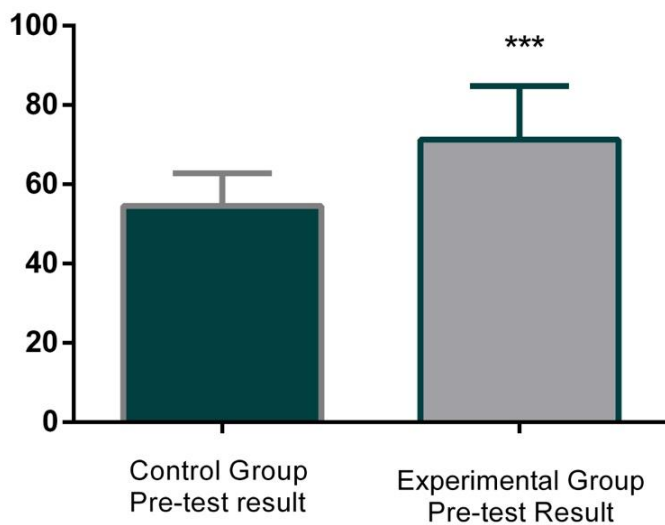


Figure 1 exposes that there is an insignificant difference between the control and experimental groups at the beginning of the research. Students from both groups were close in level to each other. However, in the experimental group we had three learners which they were studied in a private school in the high school level. Due to this, they were at a higher level in speaking in target language than the rest of their classmates in experimental level. Moreover, the experimental groups scores were little bit higher than control group. The rest of the learns from both groups got similar marks at the beginning of the study. This is because they have the similar background knowledge in target language speaking skills. They were all hesitating to use the target language to communicate between each other also, they were weak speakers to speak in English.

Are there any differences between the control group and experimental group post-speaking test?

Outcomes of post-test speaking skills.

At the end of the enquiry post-test speaking skills evaluated. The participants of both experimental and control groups were assessed and evaluated by the same three teachers who they did the pre-test of speaking skills at the beginning of the study. Assessors have used the same method for speaking criteria's as they did in pre-test speaking skills assessment.

Post-test speaking skills outcomes for the experimental group

Table 7. Post-test speaking skills outcomes for experimental group

Fluency Pronunciation Grammar Comprehension Vocabulary Total

| | | | | | | |
|----------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Mean | 16.88 | 18.13 | 17.29 | 16.88 | 18.13 | 87.29 |
| Std. Deviation | 2.47 | 2.47 | 2.55 | 2.47 | 2.47 | 6.91 |

Table 7 reveals that participants in the experimental group have developed their communication skills component after studying 15 weeks and training in learning the English language by applying cooperative language learning activities in the classroom which grouped by multiple intelligence domains in the classroom. As it can be seen that learners have developed their pronunciation and vocabulary skills, as they were weak in pre-test examination. However, they improved their fluency, grammar, and comprehension skills. After training them on cooperative language learning strategies they become better speakers in the English language. They become active listeners beside they also are active speakers in the classroom interactions. Learners were not shy to express their opinions anymore. After all, they were motivated at the end of the study to learn more and discover about the English language and English culture to improve their English language learning experience.

We can see here that CL activities had a significant effect on enhancing learner's communication skills. It helped them to be good speakers and do not hesitate to use target language in the classroom and daily communications.

Table 8. Pre and post-test of experimental group results of speaking skills.

| | Mean | Std. Deviation | P-Value |
|-------------------------|--------------|----------------|---------------|
| Pre-test Fluency | 15 | 2.89 | 0.0019 |
| Post-test Fluency | 16.88 | 2.47 | |
| Pre-test Pronunciation | 14.8 | 3.38 | 0.0003 |
| Post-test Pronunciation | 18.13 | 2.473 | |
| Pre-test Grammar | 14.6 | 3.51 | 0.0002 |
| Post-test Grammar | 17.29 | 2.54 | |
| Pre-test Delivery | 14.6 | 3.80 | 0.001 |
| Post-test Delivery | 16.88 | 2.47 | |

| | | | |
|----------------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| Pre-test Vocabulary | 13.4 | 3.45 | 0.0001 |
| Post-test Vocabulary | 18.13 | 2.47 | |
| Pre-test Total | 72.4 | 14.44 | 0.0001 |
| Post-test Total | 87.29 | 6.91 | |

Table 8 exposes that participants of experimental group got better scores in post test comparing to pre test speaking skills strategies, statically there is a highly significant between their statically values. After 15 weeks of studying and teaching them, they have enhanced in fluency and vocabulary skills and other components of speaking skills.

Outcomes of post test speaking skills of Control Group.

Table 9. comparison between pre and post test speaking skills strategies of control group.

| | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|-------------------------|--------------|----------------|
| Pre-test Fluency | 11.96 | 2.915 |
| Post-test Fluency | 11.96 | 2.915 |
| Pre-test Pronunciation | 11.96 | 2.915 |
| Post-test Pronunciation | 11.96 | 2.915 |
| Pre-test Grammar | 10.43 | 3.666 |
| Post-test Grammar | 12.17 | 3.312 |
| Pre-test Delivery | 11.3 | 2.704 |
| Post-test Delivery | 11.3 | 2.704 |
| Pre-test Vocabulary | 10.65 | 2.74 |
| Post-test Vocabulary | 12.17 | 3.639 |
| Pre-test Total | 56.3 | 12.63 |
| Post-test Total | 59.13 | 11.93 |

Table 9 statically values of comparing between pre and post test speaking skills of control group reveals that there is not a significant difference between them after 15 weeks of

studying target language by applying the traditional method to teach learners. However, means of grammar and vocabulary have been improved at post-test this is happened due to studying vocabulary skills for passing in the course. Memorizing rules and structures of grammar and vocabulary made them to score a better mean value in post-test to pass in the final examination of the course which they took. At the end, control group learners did not enhance their verbal communication skills during traditionally teaching them. They remained as shy and weak speakers in the target language.

Are there any significant differences between pre-test results and post-test results in the experimental group.

Comparison between Experimental and Control Group Post-test of Speaking Skills

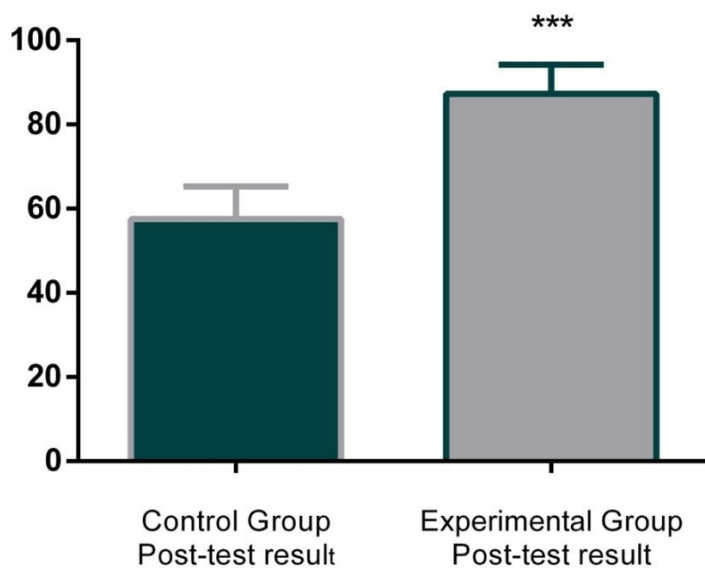
Table 10. Comparison between experimental and control group post-test speaking skills

| <i>Group</i> | N | Standard Deviation | Mean | P Value |
|---------------------------|----------|-------------------------------|-------------|----------------|
| <i>Control Group</i> | 24 | 1.59 | 57.5 | < 0.0001 |
| <i>Experimental Group</i> | 24 | 1.41 | 87.2 | |

From table 10. we can see that there is statically highly significant difference between experimental and control group post test speaking skills. This reveals that experimental group learners have progressed their communication skills during 15 weeks of the language teaching process. This is all the power of cooperative language teaching activities inside the classroom. Moreover, accounting learner’s intelligence domain to make small groups to practice target language in the classroom made students learn more and enjoying practicing target language while learning.

Here is a graph that reveals the score difference between both groups in post-test speaking skills for better understanding the statically values.

Figure 2. differences between control and experimental post-test speaking skills.



Conclusion and Recommendation

This study was conducted to see the impact of cooperative language learning based by multiple intelligence to enhance freshmen year learners speaking skills in Tishk International University at Faculty of Education in Kurdistan region-Iraq. The findings of the study have shown that cooperative language learning activates supported by multiple intelligence has a highly significant effect on improving learner's communication skills. Consequently, language teaching instructors should be aware of cooperative learning activities based on multiple intelligence domains have momentous affect and they have huge benefit. Therefore, it helps language teaching teachers to create a comfortable and enjoyable classroom environment for learners to enhance their verbal communication skills. Furthermore, cooperative activities change the classroom environment form traditional to effective cooperation method. The data was revealed that if language instructors want a better and a comfortable environment for their learners they have to use cooperative language learning approaches which it is supported by multiple intelligence domains. For an impactful and enjoyable foreign language learning classroom the data in this study reveals that cooperative language learning is one of the highly recommended method.

Finally, based on the revealed data and findings of this quasie-experimental study researcher suggest for English language instructors to create a comfortable atmosphere for their learners by preparing cooperative activities and find their learners intelligence domains. Teachers also have to consider of applying cooperative activities to make learners assertive in speaking skills. Additionally, language learners also should corporate and assist each other based on common goals and learning objectives to improve their language learning skills.

Participants also should be aware of their multiple intelligence domains to enhance their communication skills. Moreover, for scholars and next researchers who would like to investigate in this field, the researcher is recommending them to be aware of language assessment tools and they have to be aware that applying the cooperative language learning activities in large classroom is kind difficult to control and manage.

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