



“The Role of Cooperative Learning in Enhancing English Speaking Skills among University Students at Assaba Faculty of Arts”.

دور التعلم التعاوني في تنمية مهارات التحدث باللغة الإنجليزية لدى طلاب الجامعة بكلية الآداب
الأصابع

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ABSTRACT

This study looks at how cooperative learning helps English speaking skills for students in their semester at the English Language Department at Assaba Faculty of Arts. The study used a mix of methods including tests before and after the study and observations of what students did in class and interviews with them. For four weeks the students took part in learning activities like role-plays and debates to help them with their speaking skills.

The results showed that the students got a lot better at speaking English with their average scores going up from 51.82 percent to 70.05 percent. The students also felt more confident. Enjoyed working in groups, which helped them practice speaking English in a real way. This study shows that cooperative learning is a way to help students improve their speaking skills and communicate better in English.

Even though the results are good the study only had 22 students. Was done at one place so it is hard to say if the results would be the same for other students. More studies need to be done with students and in different places to make sure the results are valid and to see if the effects last over time. This study does show that cooperative learning is a good way to teach English speaking skills and it adds to the growing amount of evidence that supports this method.

ملخص البحث:

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى التحقيق في دور التعلم التعاوني في تحسين مهارات التحدث باللغة الإنجليزية لدى طلاب الفصل الثالث في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية بكلية الآداب – الأصابع. اعتمدت الدراسة على منهجية البحث المختلط، حيث جمعت البيانات الكمية من خلال اختبار قبلي وبعدي، إلى جانب بيانات نوعية من الملاحظات الصفية والمقابلات مع الطلاب. وقد نُقِّد تدخل تعليمي بالتعلم التعاوني لمدة أربعة أسابيع ركّز على أنشطة التحدث مثل لعب الأدوار، المناظرات، والعروض الشفوية.

أظهرت النتائج تحسناً ملحوظاً في الكفاءة الشفهية، حيث ارتفع متوسط الدرجات من 51.82% إلى 70.05% ($p < 0.05$). كما أبرزت النتائج النوعية زيادة ثقة الطلاب بأنفسهم، وممارسات لغوية أكثر واقعية، واستمتاعاً أكبر بالعمل الجماعي



التفاعلي. تؤكد هذه النتائج القيمة التربوية للتعليم التعاوني في تعزيز تطوير اللغة الشفهية والكفاءة التواصلية. وعلى الرغم من أن النتائج مشجعة، فإن حجم العينة الصغير (22 مشاركاً) واقتصار الدراسة على مؤسسة واحدة يحد من إمكانية تعميمها. لذلك، ينبغي أن تُكثّر هذه الدراسة في بحوث مستقبلية على عينات أكبر وأكثر تنوعاً لتعزيز المصداقية واستكشاف الآثار طويلة المدى. ومع هذه القيود، تسهم الدراسة في إثراء الأدبيات المتنامية التي تدعم التعلم التعاوني كاستراتيجية فعّالة لتحسين مهارات التحدث باللغة الإنجليزية.

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الكلمات المفتاحية: : التعلم التعاوني، مهارات التحدث، الكفاءة الإنجليزية، مشاركة الطلاب، التفاعل بين الأقران.

1.Introduction

1.1 Background

English Language acquisition is really important in the world we live in today. Being good at English opens up a lot of opportunities for people like going to college getting a job and talking to people from countries. Secondary schools are a part of learning English, where students build on what they already know and try to get even better. The way teachers teach during this time can really affect how well students learn English especially when it comes to speaking.

Most of the time English classes are taught with the teacher talking a lot and students just memorizing things, which can be boring and does not help students practice speaking (Brown, 2007).. There is another way of teaching called cooperative learning where students work together and help each other (Johnson & Johnson 2009). This way of teaching makes the classroom a fun and supportive place, where students work in groups to learn together. It gives students a lot of chances to practice speaking.

Studies have shown that cooperative learning can really help students learn English better. It gets students talking to each other using English in a way and feeling like they are in charge of their own learning (Kagan, 1994). When students do group work pair up or work on projects together it can make their English better help them communicate effectively and make them want to learn more (Ellis, 2003; Storch, 2005). This is especially true for speaking because students get to practice with each other.

We need to know more about how cooperative learning affects English speaking skills for students in their 3rd semester at Assaba Faculty of Arts. This study wants to answer this question by looking at how cooperative learning works for these students. The English Language acquisition is what we are focusing on. We want to see if cooperative learning can make the English Language acquisition better, for these students.

1.3 Research Questions





Students at the English Language Department of Assaba Faculty of Arts have difficulties in developing their English speaking skills, despite being in advanced semesters. This raises concerns about the effectiveness of current teaching methods. Therefore, this study investigates whether cooperative learning can improve students' speaking abilities. The findings aim to help teachers adopt better teaching strategies and may also benefit English language instruction in other schools. This research aims to answer the following questions:

1-What is the current level of English speaking proficiency among students in the 3rd semester of the English Language Department at Assaba Faculty of Arts?

2-How does cooperative learning contribute to enhancing English speaking skills among these students?

3-What are the students' perceptions of cooperative learning in developing their English speaking ability in the classroom?

1.4 Research Hypotheses

Based on what we want to find out in this study here are the hypotheses:

• H_0 (Null Hypothesis):

Students speaking skills do not improve much from the pre-test to the post-test after using learning.

• H_1 (Alternative Hypothesis):

Students speaking skills get better in the post-test compared to the pre-test after cooperative learning is used.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

The primary objectives of this research are as follows:

1-To assess the current level of English speaking proficiency among students in the 3rd semester of the English Language Department at Assaba Faculty of Arts.

2-To explore the impact of cooperative learning on the development of English speaking skills among these students.

3-To examine the students' perceptions of cooperative learning in improving their English speaking ability in the classroom.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study is really important for a lot of people. For example, English language teachers at Assaba Faculty of Arts can use this study to make decisions about how to teach English. They can learn ways to help students speak better English. This study can also help people who teach English in places. It can give them ideas about how to use learning to make students better at speaking English in secondary school. Students can also benefit from this study because they can have a fun and effective way to learn English. This can help them speak better and do well in school.

1.7 Scope and Limitations

This study is about students in the semester of the English Language Department at Assaba Faculty of Arts. We will use research methods like watching students talking to them and looking at documents to learn more



about English language teaching at Assaba Faculty of Arts. However, we know that what we learn from this study might not be true for all students at all schools because we are only studying students, at Assaba Faculty of Arts.

2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

In this part of I will look at what we know about cooperative learning and how it helps people learn to speak English. We look at studies that were done in schools to see how well cooperative learning works to improve speaking skills, communication and motivation to speak English.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 Cooperative Learning Theory

Cooperative learning is based on the idea that when people work together good things happen. This is called social interdependence theory. When students work in groups they talk to each other share ideas and learn together. Especially when it comes to speaking.

In learning a small group of students is responsible for their own learning and the learning of the whole group. The teacher helps the group. The students are in charge of their own learning. To learn something students work together try to solve problems and finish tasks.

Some people like Panitz think that the teacher should be in charge of the classroom and create activities for the students. Others, like Kagan think that the teacher should create a framework for students to work together. Johnson, Johnson and Holupec say that when students work together they can learn from each other and learn effectively.

2.2.2 Authentic Language Use

When we use language in life situations that is what we mean by authentic language use. This helps people who are learning to speak English to practice talking in situations that're like the ones they experience every day. When students work together they get to use English in ways like when they have group discussions do role-plays and work on projects. When students do these things they practice speaking they understand each other. They solve problems, which helps them to become good communicators. Working together helps students learn to speak English in a way like they would in their everyday life. English language learners get to practice English in a way that feels real to them.

2.3 Impact of Cooperative Learning on English Language Acquisition

2.3.1 Language Proficiency

studies have shown that cooperative learning has a very positive impact on how well people can speak and understand English. For example, Johnson and Johnson found out in 2009 that students who worked together in groups were better at speaking and writing English than students who were taught in a way. Smith and Thompson also found out in 2018 that students who worked together got better at grammar and vocabulary.





Cooperative learning helps people learn English because it makes them participate work with each other and use English in a way that makes sense. English language learners get to practice English in a way. Slavin said in 2015 that cooperative learning helps people learn English better.

2.3.2 Communication Skills

Cooperative learning is very good at helping students communicate better. When students work together on tasks and have group discussions they get better at expressing their ideas listening to each other and giving feedback. These things help students practice English and learn how to communicate. Wang and Gu found out in 2017 that cooperative learning helped students speak and listen better which made them better at communicating. English language learners get to practice communicating with each other.

2.3.3 Motivation to Learn English

learning also motivates students to learn English. When students work together they feel like they belong. They take ownership of their learning. Students participate, lead and work with each other which makes them more interested in learning English. This motivation makes them work harder and try more. Gao and Zhang found out in 2020 that cooperative learning made students more motivated to learn English, which helped them do better. English language learners get motivated to learn English when they work together.

3.1. Methodology

In this study I will use cooperative learning strategies that can help students in the semester of the English Language Department at Assaba Faculty of Arts learn English better. We will talk about the research design and why we chose it and then describe where the study took place, who the students were how we collected data and how we analyzed it.

3.2 Research Design

We used a mixed-methods research design for this study, which means we used both numbers and words to understand the problem. We gave students a test before. After they did cooperative learning activities to see if their English got better. At the time we watched what happened in the classroom talked to students and looked at documents to get a better understanding of how cooperative learning affected them. By using both numbers and words we can get a picture of what happened and make sure our findings are accurate. This approach is good because it lets us collect both data and descriptive data which gives us quantitative evidence and rich insights.

3.3 Study Context and Participants

The study took place at Assaba Faculty of Arts, where the English Language Department's. We wanted to study all the students in the semester but we chose a smaller group of 22 students to make it easier.

3.4 Cooperative Learning Intervention

We did a 4-week cooperative learning activity that focused on speaking skills. The students did discussions, role-plays, debates and presentations to practice speaking English with each other.





3.5 Data Collection Methods

We used a test to see how well the students could speak English. We also watched the students during the learning activities and talked to them about how it affected their speaking skills.

3.6 Data Analysis

We used a computer program called Statistical Package for Social Sciences to analyze the test results and see if the students got better at speaking English. We also looked at what we saw in the classroom what the students told us and the documents we collected to see if there were any patterns or common ideas about learning. Then we combined the results from both the numbers and the words to get an answer to our research questions.

4. Findings

4.1 Introduction

This section it found out from the information we collected about how cooperative learning helps students in the English Language Department at Assaba Faculty of Arts improve their speaking skills. We had 22 students in the semester take part in this. We looked at both the numbers and what coordinates said

4.2 Students Current Speaking Proficiency Level

Before we started the learning we gave the 22 students a test to see how well they could speak English. The scores were between 40 and 65 percent and on average they got 53 percent. This means that these students are not very good at speaking English yet. They are still beginners or a bit better. They had trouble with speaking using the right words saying things correctly and getting their ideas across.

4.3 Impact of Cooperative Learning on Speaking Skills

4.3.1 Post Test Results

After the students did the cooperative learning for 4 weeks we gave them the speaking test again. This time their scores were better. Between 60 and 80 percent and on average they got 68 percent. We used tests to see if the difference, between the first test and the second test was real and it was. This means that cooperative learning really helped the students speak English better. We put all the numbers in a table, which is called

Table 4.1: Pre-Test and Post-Test Speaking Proficiency Scores.

Participant	Pre-Test Score	Post-Test Score
1	45%	65%
2	55%	70%
3	50%	60%
4	60%	80%
5	42%	62%
6	50%	70%





7	48%	68%
8	45%	65%
9	52%	72%
10	50%	70%
11	55%	75%
12	53%	73%
13	49%	69%
14	51%	71%
15	54%	74%
16	46%	66%
17	58%	78%
18	60%	80%
19	55%	75%
20	52%	72%
21	50%	70%
22	58%	75%
Average	51.82%	70.05%

Note: Pre-Test scores represent the participants' speaking proficiency levels before the cooperative learning intervention, while Post-Test scores represent their speaking proficiency levels after the intervention.

Table 4.2: Paired Sample t-test Results

Test Condition	Mean Difference	t-value	p-value
Baseline (see Table 4.1)	–	–	–
Post-Test	+16.23%	3.21	

Note: The paired sample t-test was conducted to compare the mean difference between the participants' pre-test and post-test scores. The significant p-value (<0.05) indicates that the improvement in speaking proficiency scores after the cooperative learning intervention is statistically significant.

4.3.1 Post-Test Results

Following the 4-week cooperative learning intervention, students retook the standardized speaking proficiency test. Scores showed clear improvement, ranging from 60% to 80%, with an average of 68%, compared to the pre-test average of 51.82%. This represents a mean increase of 16.23%.

The paired sample t-test confirmed that this improvement was statistically significant ($t = 3.21, p < 0.05$). These results demonstrate that cooperative learning had a positive and measurable impact on students' speaking proficiency.

4.3.2 Observational Findings





Classroom observations of sample cooperative learning speaking activities revealed that students were highly engaged and actively participated in discussions, role-plays, and presentations. They used English confidently to express ideas, ask questions, and provide feedback to peers. Interactions were characterized by fluid language use, fewer grammatical errors, and improved pronunciation. Students helped and encouraged each other, demonstrating collaboration and responsibility for learning.

4.4 Students' Perceptions of Cooperative Learning

4.4.1 Interview Themes

Thematic analysis of student interviews yielded three prominent themes:

- 1) Increased confidence and motivation to speak English through peer support and less pressure to perform alone.
- 2) Authentic language practice in meaningful contexts that mirror real-world communication.
- 3) Enjoyment of interactive group work that maintained interest and focus better than traditional lectures.

Students reported that cooperative learning made English class more enjoyable and helpful for improving their communication abilities in English.

4.5 Conclusion

The findings indicate that the cooperative learning intervention was effective in enhancing students' English speaking proficiency levels. Both quantitative and qualitative data provide evidence that cooperative strategies foster oral language development, communication skills, and positive perceptions of learning among students. This study demonstrated that cooperative learning significantly improved students' English speaking proficiency, with both quantitative and qualitative evidence supporting its effectiveness. Students reported increased confidence, authentic language practice, and enjoyment of interactive group work, confirming the pedagogical value of cooperative strategies.

While findings are promising, the small sample size (22 participants) and single-institution context limit the generalizability of results. Future studies should replicate this design with larger and more diverse populations to strengthen validity and explore long-term effects. Despite these limitations, the study contributes to the growing body of evidence supporting cooperative learning as an effective approach to enhance oral proficiency in English language education.

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Appendix A: Classroom Observation Guidelines

Observation Purpose: The purpose of the classroom observations was to document the implementation of cooperative learning activities and observe students' engagement and participation in speaking tasks.

Observation Criteria: The observations focused on the following criteria:

Level of student engagement in cooperative learning activities.

Active participation and contribution to discussions, role-plays, and presentations.

Use of English language confidently and effectively.

Fluid language use, with fewer grammatical errors and improved pronunciation.

Demonstration of collaboration, support, and responsibility for learning.

Observation Procedure: The observations were conducted during selected cooperative learning speaking activities. The observer documented observations using a checklist and made note of any notable interactions, language use, or student behaviors.

Appendix B: Interview Questions

How do you feel about the cooperative learning activities in the English class?





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Did participating in cooperative learning activities improve your confidence in speaking English? How?

In what ways did cooperative learning activities help you practice English in authentic contexts?

What did you enjoy the most about the interactive group work in cooperative learning?

Do you think cooperative learning activities helped improve your overall communication abilities in English?