

**دور استعمال التعليم التعاوني في تدريس اللغة الانكليزية
في محافظة صلاح الدين**

The Role of Using Cooperative Instruction in
Teaching English in Saladin Secondary Schools

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المخلص

تهدف الدراسة الحالية الى توضيح دور استعمال التعليم التعاوني في تدريس اللغة الانكليزية. الأدوات المستخدمة في هذه الدراسة هي استبانة واجراء مقابلة، حيث بلغت العينة المستخدمة في هذه الدراسة 30 طالباً من ثانوية تكريت و 51 مدرسا تم اختيارهم عشوائياً للاستبيان. علاوة على ذلك، شارك أحد عشر معلماً للمقابلة. وقد تبين أن هناك العديد من التعقيدات الموجودة في ممارسة التعليم التعاوني مثل: غياب الإدراك الكافي للمدربين حول التعلم التعاوني. تقسيم المجموعات بشكل عشوائي وغير ذي صلة , وايضا لا يملك المتعلمون معلومات كافية فيما يتعلق بالمهام القائمة على التعلم التعاوني.

Abstract

This study aims at showing the role of using cooperative instruction. The instruments used for this study are a questionnaire, and interview, where the sample used for this study are 30 students from Tikrit secondary school and 51 teachers for the questionnaire. Moreover, eleven teachers participated for interview. It is found out that several complications existing in cooperative instruction practice such as: the instructors' absence of sufficient realization about learning cooperatively; groups dividing randomly and in irrelevant way; the learners do not have enough information concerning the tasks based on cooperative learning.



1. Introduction

Cooperative education philosophy includes the most significant effect and result in the current educational system. Nowadays , the improvement of group working classes has presented a noticeable development in teaching English . The modification of some techniques converts the steps of educational development. So, cooperative learning became a highly significant method of teaching system in most of secondary schools in Iraq (Tan , 2015: 847).

Obviously the concern of alteration of English learning is to shift the focusing on teaching grammar and lexical terms, and of the trend of making students take part in real life situation . The improvement supports knowledge, training, participation, cooperative and chatting in learning style and raising students' interests in life experiences and mental ability(Zhang, 2004: 18).

Cooperative learning, as being a theoretical and practical system, is practiced in a lot of states in all over the world. Some specialists have revealed that learning cooperatively is regarded as an innovative and efficient teaching method. It is found out a developing harmony through using cooperative learning on learners' performance in addition to social affective forms(Buchs and Butera , 2015: 1).

1.1 The Problem of the Study

It has been stated that “ students learn more by doing something more active than simply watching and listening has long been known to both cognitive psychologists and effective teachers and cooperative learning is by its nature an active method” (Bransford and Brown, 2006: 68).

In the early 19th century, some American researchers started doing comparative studies about cooperative learning. After these works, researchers contributed the results of the studies to the foreign instruction. Dewey assumed that learners can practice learning by the way of group work and teamwork in education that he created. In Dewey's view, students can't study in loneliness; but learn by being part of community. Also ,he projected a triangular association to the social structure of notions among learners of any subjects in the community . Recently many academics have created a major involvement to the improvement of cooperative learning so that now it is used not only as a enhancement to the old-fashioned educational ways(Williams, 2017: 92).

1.2 The Aim of the Study

The aims of the current study are (1) to connect the theoretical investigation with practical teaching , and (2) to find out the effect of using cooperative instruction in secondary schools, then to check out the reality of using cooperative instruction.



1.3 Value of the study

This study has a real importance for both EFL teachers and learners since it deals with one of the highly influential technique inside classroom. This technique fit a lot of tasks and activities specially the activity book of the current series (English for Iraq).

1.4 The Plan of the Study

The procedures used in this study are:

- 1- an analysis of theoretical background of cooperative instruction and the methods related to , and its importance in different levels of schools.
- 2- The instruments which are used a questionnaire (to both teachers and students), and interviewing teachers of English to discover the difficulties and giving some techniques, that supports secondary school teachers of English to carry out cooperative learning tasks more effectively.

1.5 Limits of the Study

This study is limited to the following:

- 1- the academic year 2021/2022,
- 2- cooperative learning techniques
- 3- Secondary school students (Al Manahel secondary school as a sample), and at secondary level.
- 4- Teachers of English in secondary schools in Tikrit city.

2.0 Theoretical Background

2.1 Teaching English in Iraq

It has been noticed that some studies of middle east countries has the characteristic of improving learning English by different ways. Then these studies themselves have undergone the development to the practical approach of teaching English . Presently, cooperative and pair work learning are applied in many schools in middle east countries or privet institutions. In our state the organized investigations on the modern method at that time cooperative learning began in 1980s. in the other hand group and productive tasks initiated to be within lecture teaching at the 1990s in the 21st century and regarded as mature time of cooperative learning of English(i.e. in countries such as Iraq) (Wang, 2001:116).

Sultan (2006:549) states that in Iraq the original parts where the investigation on the topic is prepared tentatively .The focus of their research is how to increase the growth of the learners' features, where group communicating and other similar skills. Whereas, cooperative learning is really an effective movement which is extensively applied in all over the world educational institutions. In Arabic states especially Iraq, it is also widely used later in teaching but the problem was that teaching



English starts at fifth primary class with simple expressions and traditional way.

2.3 The Importance of Cooperative Learning

This type and the style of instruction is commonly known as a teaching organization in which few, heterogeneous groups or pairs of learners organized to achieve a common goal. The major features can be equal chances of learning. people are social and natural creatures and cooperation has been used previously in all features of our lives. Positive communications do not usually occur in a natural and teaching by focusing on social abilities should come first then to be harmonized by the cooperative learning techniques (Goodwin, 1999 : 29-34).

According to Davia (2021:3) it is believed that cooperative learning may stimulate any language acquisition from the following points

1. It may reduce the learners' panic from disappointment.
2. It can give chance to the students' to be able to communicate , such as , these students may retell any text or story by using their own expression, and then he/she test a partner to explain or show what was learnt from the subject, ...etc.
3. Learning cooperatively is something interesting and can encourage learners' ability of control interactive relations. During practicing cooperative learning learners can enhance each other so as to accomplish the aims of teaching process; later they can acquire using their communicative associations in the operation of the cooperative learning (Duxbury & Ling, 2010). Cooperative learning covers many goals in academic performance , social interaction , reduce fear factor , and success of the whole learning process of any subject are mentioned as follows :

1. Academic Learning

Cooperative learning may support learners in their learning educationally. Simply it can be put as students obtain the data of the topic, then they can develop meta-disciplinary ability , such as advanced demand that enhances thinking skills.” (Cohen, 1994 : 6 and Hornby, 2009: 89).

2. Social-Affective Learning

It is an additional part of learning in which learners can have advantage from the cooperative learning that used in classrooms depending on social environment (Slavin, 1995: 84).

These aspects are narrowly connected to teaching and learning of EFL. Therefore, affective factors for instance motivation and the reducing fear factor to practice English as method of interaction are particularly appropriate for learning this language . In the other hand, Long and Porter (1985:211) state that Cooperative learning tasks create helpful and loyal classroom groups, learners learn to raise confidence and respect each on inside learning process, and hence each person may have sense that he/she is at the center simultaneously(see also Jacobs & McCafferty, 2006: 56).



3. Personality Development

Brecke and Jensen (2007:36) state that Personality development is another advantage of cooperative learning strategy. It can help learners reinforce their confidence and aptitudes and stimulate their ability in the whole learning process. If learners recognize that their participations are acceptable in a group and even required and valuable for the goal of the group, then they will be excited to take part again and again. Strong relations with other colleagues permit for individual progress and responsibility (Zhang, 2010: 67).

2.4 Designing Cooperative Group Work in the Classroom

Cohen (1994: 189) clarifies that group work is a cooperative procedure for reaching positive types of knowledgeable and social learning aims; it is as well considered as a superior method for theoretical learning, for innovative problem solving and for rising oral language skill.

Johnson & Johnson (2004: 55) believe that group working provides students with opportunities to practise the language more effectively, deciding, inducing and problem solving. Moreover, it helps them to produce a deeper level of interaction with other teammates.

Slavin (1995:45) clarifies that working in groups helps students be outgoing by getting in touch with others and making decisions in their lives. Furthermore, group work establishes social norms about what to do and what not to do (Sharan, 1992: 57).

Group work also enhances students' relationships positively because students need to get in touch with other students in the same phase which encourages them to interact with no barriers (Johnson and Johnson, 2004:98). All the above discussions indicate that before developing group work, the students need to be well introduced to what group work is, what it is for and how it can contribute to their learning.

3. Procedure

3.1 Sample and Population

The population of this study is the teachers and students of preparatory schools in Tikrit. While the sample are Fifty one teachers in different schools in Tikrit. In the other hand the part which deals with learners problems or attitudes towards cooperative learning is given to 30 students from Tikrit secondary schools. The sample of the interview instrument are eleven teachers from Tikrit preparatory schools.

Table (1) The Sample of the Study

Instrument	Sample type	size
Questionnaire	Students	30
Questionnaire	Teachers	51
Interview	teachers	11



3.2 The Instruments of the Study

3.2.1 Questionnaire

The questionnaire is carefully conducted in order to allow the teachers answer it in a write way. The participants are asked to answer its items themselves, in order to get the data properly to find out the complications that have been remaining in the use of cooperative learning in countryside areas. The questionnaire which deals with teachers attitudes and problems is submitted to fifty one teachers in different schools in different towns of Saladin province. In the other hand the part which deals with learners problems or attitudes is given to 30 students from Tikrit secondary schools . Tavakol(2012 : 207) claims that face validity can “involve the judgment of researcher or of research participants that the indicator really measure the contrast” .

Validity of the questionnaire items is measured where the questionnaire face validity ensured. It is given to a jurors who are specialists at the department of English at the Iraqi universities to support the questionnaire with their valuable suggestions and advices for some modifications in the items of the questionnaire.

While concerning the reliability of the questionnaire, Cronbach's Alfa is used to measure the reliability. The value was 0.82 which is regarded as accepted one.

3.2.2 Interview

The purpose of interview is to find out some complications that are found in using cooperative learning in Iraqi schools in rural areas . There are seven items to be asked in the interview. The interviewees are eleven instructors who teach in secondary and intermediate schools. The interview time is around from fifteen to thirty minutes. The data which gathered from interviews is recorded as notes concerning the participants' point of view concerning cooperative learning. The interview included the following seven items:

- 1- What is the importance of cooperative learning ?
- 2- What problems do you encounter while teaching in general ?
- 3- Do you think that most of teachers can apply cooperative learning technique?
- 4- What are the skills or tasks that can be best applied by cooperative learning ?
- 5- Mention some ideas , suggestions or advices that can facilitate cooperative learning and make it effective.
- 6- What do you think that make learners be satisfied with cooperative learning?
- 7- Do you think that the environment in Saladin schools is appropriate enough to use cooperative learning?



4- Data Analysis

4.1 Data Related to Learner' Problems

1. Lacking Interest in Contributing Cooperative Learning

Learners are losing adequate realization in cooperative learning, for that reason they don't have interest in practicing cooperative learning during learning English . It has been found that 33.3% of the learners are sense the importance cooperative learning. So , Cooperative learning actually gives opportunities for learners to take part in cooperative learning situations and exercises .There is a fact that 40% of the learners like to study English with other learners practically , because of the absence of interest in practicing cooperative learning. In this case the influence of cooperative learning is not positive. Another matter is that 66.67% of the learners believe that they study English only for the examination. While 36% of learners suppose cooperative learning support them in learning English. It has been found out that commonly the brilliant learners who speak and practice some situations using cooperative learning ,also these intelligent learners play a leading part and help other learners in cooperative learning actions. Those weak learners who have no interest in cooperative learning activities , and they just listen to their classmates . As soon as the instructor is nearby the group that use cooperative learning, weak learners pretend that they are busy with group's discussion. while the instructor is far of them, they chat something irrelevant with the conversation with other learners; and they do not join the cooperative learning activities and have no stimulation, too. As it is mentioned in table (2).

Table (2) Items Related to Learner' Problems

No.	1. Lacking Interest in Contributing Cooperative Learning	Agree	Disagree
1	the learners are sense the importance cooperative learning	33.3%	66.67%
2	the learners like to study English with other learners practically	40%	60%
3	the learners believe that they study English only for the examination.	66.67%	33.3%
4	learners suppose cooperative learning support them in learning English	36.66%	63.34%
2. Lacking Realization Cooperative Learning			
5	learners frequently participate in learners' conversation	43%	57%



6	learners enjoy to chat problems with other classmates	30%	70%
7	learners believe their English awareness is increased from communicating in groups	26%	74%
8	schoolchildren lack the ability to communicate with other learners.	36.66	63.34
9	the learners have confidence to discuss difficulties or social subjects with other learners	40%	60%
10	the learners listen to rest of learners' conversation cautiously	36.66%	63.34

2. Lacking Realization Cooperative Learning

During carrying out cooperative learning skills, many learners are not aware about cooperative learning in general. So just 43% of learners frequently participate in learners' conversation. Most learners don't have real realization in cooperation; moreover their capability in collaboration is not useful. Another thing is that only 30% of learners enjoy to chat problems with other classmates. These learners neither cooperated with other learners nor aware about the ways of cooperation. In the old methods of teaching, instructors are only the speakers from the beginning to the end of the lecture without stopping, while learners seldom get the chance to speak and exchange their attitudes. Only 26% of learners believe their English awareness is increased from communicating in groups. Concerning the effect of traditional method of teaching, many learners hardly communicate within lectures. Some children have rarer chances to speak English with the outside world. As well, most of the schoolchildren lack the ability to communicate with other learners. Only 38% of the learners regularly give out their points of view in discoursing problems with other learners.

Only 40% of the learners have confidence to discuss difficulties or social subjects with other learners. While, some learners commonly disturbed during cooperative learning procedures, and they cannot pay attention to other learners' attitudes, only 36% of the learners listen to rest of learners' conversation cautiously. While carrying out cooperative learning situations, many learners did not participate in any chatting. Because, they do not have the ability to mention their attitude, so they prefer to be silent all the lesson. For another, most learners supposed it is not necessary to participate in the conversation as other group participants may finish the communication. Students do not appreciate the benefits that cooperative learning supply them with, therefore they do not pick up cooperative learning skills passively, as it is mentioned in table (1).



4.2 Problems Related to Teachers

1. Missing Adequate Understanding

Most of language instructors are missing understanding concerning cooperative learning; where it is difficult for them to distinguish the cooperative learning and what is its real importance. First 17.6% of the instructors have a wide knowledge concerning cooperative learning. 41.1% of the English teachers know about cooperative learning by reading or seeing some articles on TV , magazines ,and newspapers . It has been found that just 25.4% of teachers trained by higher education institutes or collages

They often considered the individuals conversation as cooperative learning . 82.3% of the teachers believed it is essential to use cooperative learning in English classes , but only 25.4 % used it. It has been found that 35.2% of teachers interconnect or acquire from instructors at the time they meet the difficulties connected with process of cooperative learning. Teachers do not realize how motivating learners in cooperative learning in the classroom teaching or how to motivate students. 82.3% of the instructors mention that the difficulties in group working are done randomly by themselves. At first teachers can give students several topics, and next they ask students to converse and explain their simple language these topics. Then some minutes later, when the learners after discussion , the cooperative learning will be ended, but the outcome is not positive. 74.6 % of the teachers' instruction manners are chiefly as traditional way of teaching. So, teacher use the old way of instruction. Thus, learners cannot create the good habit of education, see table (3).

Table (3) Questionnaire Items Related to Teachers' Problems

1. Missing Adequate Understanding about Cooperative Learning			
No.	Items	Agree	disagree
1	instructors have a wide understanding in cooperative learning.	17.6%	82.4%
2	English teachers know about cooperative learning by reading or seeing some articles on TV , magazines ,and newspapers	41.1%	58.9%
3	teachers trained by higher education institutes or collages .	25.4 %	74.6
4	teachers believed it is essential to use cooperative learning in English classes	82.35%	17.7
5	I use cooperative learning within my classes	25.4 %	74.6%



6	teachers interconnect or acquire from instructors through meeting the difficulties around cooperative learning.	35.2%	64.8%
7	the instructors mention that the difficulties in group working are done randomly by themselves.	82.35%	17.7
8	the teachers' instruction manners are chiefly as traditional way of teaching.	74.6%	25.4
2. Unreasonable Group Division			
9	frequently I distribute learners into groups of cooperative learning according to learners' desks	50.9%	49.1%
10	I divide the groups due to the learners' level ,score, ability	17.7%	82.3%
11	there will be a positive result in learners level after carrying out cooperative learning	68.6%	31.4%
3. Lack of Identifying Role Correctly and Effective Evaluation Mechanism			
12	the instructors think that they are the leaders in cooperative learning tasks.	74.5%	25.5%
13	the teachers typically attend students' group conversations.	15.6%	84.4%
14	of them only devoted significance to the summative testing in course conversation, but ignored the assessment on the process of learning.	84.3%	51.7
15	Teachers always focus on the importance of evaluating the whole group and ignored the role of members	76.4 %	23.6%

2. Unreasonable Group Division

Dividing students into groups during cooperative learning encourages students to participate in instructional tasks. 50.9% of the participants frequently distribute learners into groups of cooperative learning according to learners' desks. It has been found that 17.7% of the instructors divide the groups due to the learners' level ,score, ability, ... etc. 68.6% of the teachers believe that there will be a positive result in learners level after carrying out cooperative learning . If teachers merely divide their students into cooperative learning groups according to the order of



desks, students will not get the harmonizing in practicing activities. Some learners who have good level of knowledge are divided into one group, while learners who have weak level are not good at carrying out their activities, for the reason that they do not have the ability to form the complementary. If the group participants are all learners who are weak at education, it is hard for their instructor to achieve cooperative learning tasks. It is really hard matter when carrying out cooperative learning activities to divide cooperative learning groups, see table (3).

3. Lack Identifying Role Correctly and Effective Evaluation Mechanism

According to the attitude of traditional method of teaching, the teacher is the master of knowledge, the teacher is as well the master of teaching tasks and actions. On the other hand, when achieving cooperative learning activities, influenced by the view of old teaching methods, most teachers keep using the original roles in teaching, for instance they ask questions and answer them, moreover, they explain every point in texts and carry out all the items of the topic. 74.5 % of the instructors think that they are the leaders in cooperative learning tasks. Teachers do not make complete plans for learners' cooperative learning; also they do not participate in students' cooperative learning tasks. Only 15.6% of the teachers typically attend students' group conversations. Lacking instructors' participation, cooperative learning will not be carried out smoothly. Whereas, lacking teachers' management and supervision, see Table (3).

During practicing cooperative learning procedures, instructors are lacking actual assessment method. The other value 84.3% of them only devoted significance to the summative testing in course conversation, but ignored the assessment on the process of learning. 76.4 % of the teachers only carry out the final assessment. When some instructors assess the cooperative learning group, they always focus on the importance of evaluating the whole group and ignored the members; so, learners can miss confidence during learning. Learners expect the teachers' encouragement because most of students follow teacher's view on their outcome of cooperative work. If teachers are not concerned about students' opinions, they may lose attention and desire in participating in the cooperative learning work, see Table (3).

4.2 Data Analysis Related to the Interview

The researcher has interviewed the selected sample of English teachers and listened carefully to their responses to the prepared questions. It is found out that the responses were various and meaningful to the process of learning cooperatively. The suggestions, advices, and solutions proposed by English teachers are summarized and listed as follows:



- 1- Teachers of English and learners need time to be used to understand the whole process of the technique of cooperative learning. This matter should be achieved frequently so as to make the results of learning be influential.
- 2- Learners should have significant role, and members should be rewarded from time to time.
- 3- Learners need various and interesting tasks to practice such as competitions and games.
- 4- Learners should try their best to acquire best skills and get a wide range of benefits and knowledge from them.
- 5- Using English most of the time inside classroom is very important, but there is no problem to use mother tongue in urgent situations.
- 6- Classroom management should be taken in consideration so as to reach better results. Mess and noisy classroom is a waste of time and less improvement in using and practicing new materials.
- 7- Teachers think that some administrations of their schools are not cooperated with this style of teaching and prefer traditional methods of teaching or teacher centered style of teaching. So headmasters should be aware of modern trends of teaching such as task based , cooperative learning , group work , and others.

5. Conclusion

Cooperative learning has showed its efficiency as a teaching scheme with all the advantages it enhances to both the instructors and learners. Language learners have chances to regularly encounter the material under study through a number of venues and modes of delivery. As well as they can have prospects to use authentic language so as to achieve practical communicative tasks, even when the focus of the lesson is on language rules and mechanics rather than the development of language skills.

There are some problems in English classes: lacking of teachers' efficient information concerning cooperative learning; the management an arrangement of groups is neither practical nor enough; the learners have weak realization and abilities in cooperative learning.

After some lessons teachers find out improvement in students' learning by using cooperative learning ,since the classes atmosphere is changed to more stimulating aspects and most of the students start taking part English .

Some students feel that their role is ignored as vital members achieved something and practiced tasks given to them. So this should be treated by teacher from time to time because rewarding is important crucial in motivating participants.



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