

**EFFECTIVENESS OF COOPERATIVE LEARNING STRATEGIES
IN IMPROVING L2 COMMUNICATION SKILLS**

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Abstract

Communication ability in a second language (L2) is becoming one of the most important skills in this era of globalization, as it supports cross-cultural interactions and increases opportunities in various professional contexts. Nevertheless, many learners experience difficulties in achieving an adequate level of fluency in L2, mainly due to challenges related to the learning environment and the lack of opportunities for active communication practice. Therefore, this study aims to examine the effectiveness of implementing cooperative learning strategies in an effort to improve second language (L2) communication skills among students. This study used a quasi-experimental method with a quantitative approach, where data were obtained through a series of tests and observations to measure the development of students' abilities. The results of the data analysis showed that the implementation of cooperative learning strategies was significantly able to improve L2 communication skills compared to conventional learning methods which were more individualistic and passive. In addition, this study also highlights the importance of the role of interaction between students in the learning process as a factor that supports the improvement of communication skills more effectively.

Keywords: *Cooperative Learning Strategies, Communication Skills, Second Language*

1. INTRODUCTION

In an era of globalization marked by closer interconnections between cultures and countries, mastery of a second language (L2) has evolved from a value-added to an essential need. The ability to communicate in an international language, such as English, opens access to various opportunities, including education, career, and wider social interaction. The development of communication skills in a second language (L2) is a multifaceted and complex process that includes various linguistic, cognitive, and sociocultural dimensions.

Moreover, fostering a willingness to communicate in English, especially among young learners, is crucial to enable them to share ideas and engage with various perspectives globally, thereby improving their overall communicative competence in the target language (Dash, 2021). To achieve this, educators must implement effective teaching strategies that not only prioritize language instruction, but also create an engaging environment that encourages interaction and social networking among learners, as these elements are critical to promoting language growth and increasing willingness to communicate (Mystkowska-Wiertelak & Pawlak, 2014).

Moreover, the incorporation of modern technological tools, including social media platforms, can significantly facilitate communication by providing authentic contexts for students to interact with, thus bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application of language in real-life situations (Wiemeyer & Zeaiter, 2015). In

addition, it is imperative for teachers to adopt a dynamic approach that focuses on conversational skills, integrating vocabulary expansion with communication techniques to effectively address the challenges students face in real conversations, as traditional methods alone may not be sufficient to foster confident communication in diverse social contexts (Mofareh, 2019).

A holistic approach to language education not only empowers learners to develop their oral competence, but also encourages their active participation in meaningful exchanges, thus reducing the frustrations often associated with conversational English and fostering a more supportive learning atmosphere (Mystkowska-Wiertelak & Pawlak, 2014). The role of teachers in this process is crucial, as they must use innovative methods and resources that can make language learning more relevant and accessible, especially given the unique challenges faced by ESL learners, such as anxiety and limited vocabulary, which can hinder their desire to communicate.

Lack of interaction in language learning can significantly affect students' understanding of the material. According to Wiragunawan (2022), Students who face limited interaction, both with the teacher and with fellow students, often have difficulty in understanding the material being taught. In the context of second language (L2) learning, the lack of language interaction can hinder the development of speaking ability and overall communication skills. In addition, research Harahap (2018) shows that students' passive participation, often caused by disinterest and monotonous learning methods, can result in a lack of active participation. Students who are not motivated to engage in L2 language activities miss valuable opportunities to practice and improve their communication skills. Therefore, it is important to create an interactive learning environment and encourage active participation to overcome this problem and support the development of students' communication skills.

In the context of second language (L2) learning, communication skills are one of the important aspects that affect the success of the learning process. To achieve effective communication skills in a second language, various learning strategies need to be implemented. One approach that shows significant potential is cooperative learning strategy. Cooperative learning has been widely recognized as an effective approach in improving student achievement and their learning outcomes (Slavin, 1980). This approach not only creates a collaborative environment but also increases awareness of individual knowledge and interpersonal relationships among peers, thus contributing to the development of essential communication skills in a second language context (Armstrong et al., 2007). In addition, the structured nature of cooperative learning can provide significant benefits to students by aligning instructional strategies with the development of higher-order cognitive skills, ultimately facilitating a more engaging and supportive learning experience, and encouraging active participation and mutual support among learners (Slavin, 1980).

Research (Darmuki et al., 2017; Marfuah, 2017; Nurhayati, 2021; Pitoyo, 2020; Rahmatullah et al., 2024; Rajindra, 2022; Sari & Nuriyanti, 2020) shows that cooperative learning methods generally have positive effects on a variety of educational measures, including student interaction, self-esteem, and overall attitude toward learning, which collectively improve the ability to communicate effectively in a second language. Although the effectiveness of cooperative learning can vary, especially in relation to the

structure of learning tasks, it is usually more beneficial than traditional competitive or individualized approaches in promoting communication competence among learners from diverse backgrounds and skill levels (Lowry et al., 1951; Naughton, 2006).

This study is interesting because it focuses on the effectiveness of cooperative learning strategies in improving second language (L2) communication skills. The main problem is students' low communication skills in a second language, which is often caused by traditional learning methods that are less effective in encouraging interaction and collaboration between students. This study attempts to answer whether cooperative strategies such as the Jigsaw model can have a significant impact in improving such communication skills compared to conventional methods. The main objective of this study is to analyze the extent to which cooperative learning strategies can improve students' L2 communication skills compared to conventional learning methods. This research offers novelty by evaluating in depth the effectiveness of cooperative learning strategies in improving communication skills in a second language (L2).

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This type of research is experimental research. The research design used is Quasi Experiment Design. In the Quasi Experimental Design design used the one group Pretest-Posttes Design model in the design there are two groups, each of which is randomly selected, then given a pretest to determine the initial state of whether there is a difference between the experimental group and the control group (Trianto, 2010). The population in this study amounted to 83 students. The sample selection technique used in this study was purposive sampling technique. Data collection methods are carried out by observation, documentation, and tests. The data analysis technique used is quantitative data analysis technique using the SPSS version 22 windows program.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Research Results

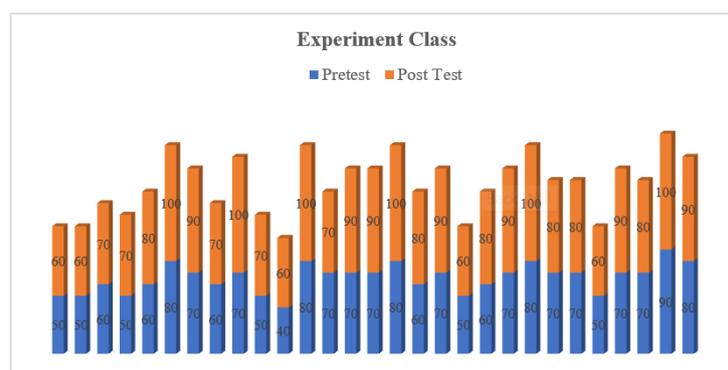


Figure 1. Pretest and Post Test Data of Experimental Classes

Figure 1 shows that the cooperative method applied in the experimental class had a positive impact on students' L2 Communication Skills.

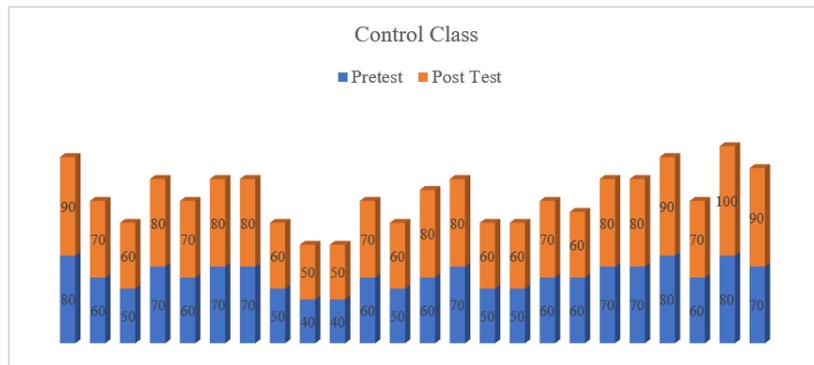


Figure 2. Control Class Pretest and Post Test Data

Based on Figure 2, although there was an increase in scores from the pretest to the post-test, this increase was not as clear and not as large as that seen in the experimental class. This may indicate that the method applied in the control class may be less effective than the one applied in the experimental class.

Table 1. Variance Homogeneity Test Variance Homogeneity Test

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Communication Skills L2	Based on Mean	.176	1	51	.676
	Based on Median	.177	1	51	.675
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	.177	1	50.977	.675
	Based on trimmed mean	.190	1	51	.665

The homogeneity test results of the control class and the experimental class obtained $0.676 > 0.05$. This means that at the 5% level of cognition H_0 is accepted. Thus, it can be concluded that the variance of the two groups, namely the experimental class and the control class, is homogeneous.

Table 2. T Test Results

		Independent Samples Test								
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper	
Communication Skills L2	Equal variances assumed	.176	.676	2.346	51	.023	8.87931	3.78501	1.28059	16.47803
	Equal variances not assumed			2.359	50.093	.022	8.87931	3.76372	1.32001	16.43861

Based on this, it can be concluded that L2 communication skills using the Cooperative Model are higher than the learning outcomes using the conventional model.

3.2. Discussion

Cooperative learning models significantly improve communication skills in second language (L2) learners by encouraging interaction, collaboration and active participation. Various studies show that this approach not only improves speaking ability but also encourages students to more effectively interact with their peers. For example, research by Sari & Nuriyanti (2020) found that the use of media such as kokamicabi in cooperative learning can lead to significant improvement in speaking skills. The results of this study are also supported by Nurhayati (2021) which shows that cooperative learning models are proven to be effective in improving students' ability to express ideas and appreciate the contributions of their peers, creating a more supportive learning environment.

(Darmuki et al., 2017; Pitoyo, 2020) also showed concurrent results, students taught through cooperative methods obtained higher scores in speaking tests compared to students in conventional settings, demonstrating the clear superiority of cooperative learning. The Jigsaw model, as one of the cooperative techniques, has also been shown to significantly improve students' communication skills, especially in social studies (Marfuah, 2017). Nonetheless, some educators argue that individual learning styles and preferences may not always be compatible with group dynamics, which may hinder the progress of some students. However, overall, the available evidence supports the effectiveness of cooperative learning in improving L2 learners' communication skills.

Cooperative learning models are proven to be effective in improving second language (L2) communication skills, especially in speaking and vocabulary acquisition. Structures such as team-pair-solo, partners, jigsaw, and think-pair-share show a positive impact on speaking skills in English as a foreign language (Abuseileek & AbuAlshar, 2013). Moreover, the collaborative task contributed to better results in the L2 vocabulary test compared to the individual task, despite similar language exposure (Kim, 2008). Cooperative strategy training also affects the pattern of interaction in discussion groups, creating better learning opportunities (Naughton, 2006).

The results of this study are in line with research Rahmatullah et al (2024) which showed that collaborative learning strategies such as the Jigsaw model significantly improved students' speaking ability, as shown by a clear increase in both pre-test and post-test scores, signaling an increase in communication engagement. The integration of collaborative teaching methods in a bilingual setting creates a language-rich environment, which not only increases confidence but also students' active participation in speaking activities. Moreover, cooperative group learning in English classes promotes positive interdependence and active engagement of students, which ultimately contributes to improved academic outcomes and overall communication skills (Rajindra, 2022). Thus, the cooperative model makes a significant contribution to the development of students' speaking skills in an L2 learning context.

The implementation of cooperative strategy training programs is proven to enhance meaningful interactions among students, create an environment conducive to language acquisition, and improve their oral communication skills in the target language (Naughton, 2006). Thus, cooperative learning not only aids the acquisition of linguistic elements but also equips students with the ability to manage social dynamics in a group

setting, thus enriching their overall communicative competence in a second language context (Armstrong et al 2007; Wiemeyer & Zeaiter 2015; Goodwin, 1999; Hashmi et al., 2020).

Furthermore, as students engage in group activities, they not only contribute to each other's understanding of language concepts, but also develop essential social skills, such as active listening and appreciating different perspectives, which are crucial for effective communication (Goodwin, 1999; Hashmi et al., 2021; Lowry et al., 1951; Armstrong et al 2007). By integrating social skills instruction with cooperative learning strategies, educators can enhance students' collaborative abilities, allowing them to work effectively in diverse teams and improve their overall communication abilities in second language acquisition (Goodwin, 1999).

This framework suggests that cooperative learning not only facilitates academic achievement, but also fosters the social competencies necessary for successful communication, thus offering a holistic approach to language education that can bridge the gap between theory and practice in second language learning environments (Hashmi et al., 2021). This approach also promotes accountability among students, as each member must contribute to the success of the group, which encourages a sense of interdependence that is crucial for the development of effective communication skills in a second language context (Goodwin, 1999; Hashmi et al., 2020).

Theoretically, this study strengthens the concept that cooperative learning is not only effective in improving speaking skills, but also in creating a more supportive learning environment. Practically, the findings of this study can serve as a reference for educators to adopt cooperative learning methods that are more effective in improving students' communication skills, especially in a second language.

4. CONCLUSION

This study shows that the cooperative learning method is significantly more effective than the conventional method in improving students' L2 communication skills. The data showed that students who used the cooperative approach had a greater improvement in communication skills than students in the control class. From the results of the study, it is recommended that teachers consistently integrate cooperative learning strategies in the teaching-learning process, especially in language classes. This approach is proven to be effective in improving students' communication skills, especially in the aspects of speaking and collaboration.

In addition, it is important for educators to continuously evaluate and adjust the cooperative methods used, according to students' needs and classroom dynamics. The implication of this study not only confirms the need for the integration of cooperative learning strategies in the language education curriculum, but also underlines the potential of such strategies in creating a more dynamic, participatory, and student-centered learning environment, so that learning outcomes in the communication aspect of language can be more optimal.

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