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Exploring the Effects of Collaborative Learning Strategies on English Language Proficiency Skills at Higher Education Institutions: A Pedagogical Perspective

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Abstract

This study explores the effects of collaborative learning strategies (CLS) on enhancing English language proficiency among students at higher education institutions from a pedagogical perspective. Recognizing the global importance of English as a lingua franca, the study investigates how collaborative techniques influence students' reading, writing, and listening skills. Using an experimental design, the research was conducted across public sector universities in South Punjab, Pakistan. The study employed a pre-test, post-test-one group experimental approach involving 40 students to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions of collaborative learning strategies in English language classroom. A standardized English proficiency test adapted from the Vietnam National University English Proficiency Test (VNU-EPT) was administered as both, the pre-test and post-test throughout the fall semester of 2024. Findings revealed that CLS significantly improved students' language proficiency, particularly in writing and speaking. Teachers reported increased involvement, confidence, and peer learning benefits among students. The study highlighted the need for institutional support, including professional development programs, reduced class sizes, and integration of peer assessments to promote a collaborative learning environment. Recommendations also emphasize the improvement in digital infrastructure and resource availability to facilitate technology-assisted collaboration. This research contributes valuable insights into modern, student-centered teaching approaches that can elevate English language learning in higher education settings. It also provides a foundation for policymakers, educators, and curriculum developers to adopt and promote collaborative strategies in language instruction, both locally and globally.

Keywords: Collaborative Learning, English Language, Higher Education, Teacher Practices, Student Engagement, Language Skills

Introduction

A significant part of human growth and development is the interconnected procedure of teaching and learning. This procedure is interrelated and requires sharing of knowledge, skills and abilities between a learner and a teacher (Cagatan & Quirap, 2024). The ability of working together is one of the most desirable behaviors for people in the educational and professional settings of the 21st-century skills (Chakyarkandiyil & Prakasha, 2023). When it comes to teaching and learning process at higher education institutions, academicians strongly recommend that teaching and learning procedure should be more innovative, interactive and progressive in order to cater to the needs of 21st-century learners (Garcia, 2021). In recent years, the use of collaborative learning has been observed on the constant rise as an instructional method for English language teaching and learning (Mishrah, 2023). The use of collaborative learning strategies specifically in improvement of English language skills have gained ample attention of educators and scholars, viewing its effectiveness of students' listening, speaking, reading and writing skills (Lee & Kim, 2023).

The conventional methods of teaching English language in higher education institutions have faced serious criticism due to their reliance on lectures and other mechanical methods, which may not necessarily foster students' creativity and innovation (Mustafa & Noor, 2022). On the contrary, collaborative learning provides a more sophisticated manner of learning and engages the students in the actual process of learning within the classroom. This emerges not only from a shift in the needs of students, but also from the adoption of modern learning trends that aim to democratize the learning process. Engaging students meaningfully and authentically has always been a challenge for educators at higher education institutions (HEIs) due to significant adoption and advancement of globalized English usage trends (Altun & Ergin, 2021).

Integrative grouping, peer discussion, pair and group presentations, role plays and other such tasks have important benefits for intercultural and target language (Sadapotto et al., 2024). The language learners who work in pairs, exhibit higher levels of language proficiency due to constant exposure to the actual language use and encouragement (Tuan, 2021). Furthermore, the strategies such as group work, peer work and role play enhance higher-order thinking skills and conflict-resolving abilities since the students engage in adaptive negotiations to restore positive relationships and resolve conflict incidences (Le & Kim, 2023).

The tasks of listening, speaking, reading and writing divide four core skills that usually measure language proficiency (Neiriz, 2023). Researchers have established that various teaching modes enrich these skills by providing several opportunities to use the target language in specific contexts. Group activities that attach students to productive discussion, role-plays and peer observation provide a practical environment where students obtain and produce language in a comfortable settings (Pentuchi and Lassi, 2023). Further, the act of co-constructing meaning and offering comments to colleagues or peers also enhances the students' ability to correct themselves while using language in real time (Storch, 2019).

Collaborative teaching is an instructional strategy that engages students in a group with different abilities and proficiencies and mutually involve them in a learning process. In such a strategy, a number of people work together by respecting, valuing and appreciating the contributions of each other. One of the main objectives of collaborative learning strategy is to create a harmony among the members of the group that is obtained through cooperation contrary to competition. The focus remains mainly on the performance of individuals (Telumbanua et al., 2023). This is not due to a change in the learning needs of the students, but also a need of adopting modern learning trends. The objective of which is to democratize the learning process in a language classroom. Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) face a great challenge in engaging their students meaningfully and authentically in various fields and spheres through adoption and advancement of globalized English usage trends (Altun & Ergin, 2021).

The effectiveness of collaborative learning also influences students and teachers' perceptions of its efficiency in improving English language knowledge. The impact of collaborative learning reveals a positive attitude among students as it fosters speaking skills and students' overall language learning proficiency (Ali et al., 2025). According to Tuan's (2021) research, students were able to speak English more fluently in group settings because group-assigned tasks alleviated their usual pressure. A study established that collaborative learning environment created in an English language classroom resulted in learners' higher engagement and motivation (Hastuti et al., 2024).

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were to:

1. Examine the current level of students' English language proficiency skills at higher education institutions.
2. Assess the effects of collaborative learning strategies on students' English language proficiency skills at higher education institutions.

Research Hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no significant variation in the current level of students' listening skills at higher education institutions in pre test scores.

H₀₂: There is no significant variation in the current level of students' reading skills at higher education institutions in pre test scores.

H₀₃: There is no significant variation in the current level of students' writing skills at higher education institutions in pre test scores.

H₀₄: There is no significant variation in the current level of students' speaking skills at higher education institutions in pre test scores.

Literature Review

Collaborative learning (CL) is generally defined as a teaching approach where students collaborate in small groups to attain common learning objectives (Dillenbourg, 1999). In higher education, CL focuses on active engagement, group interaction, and collective responsibility in constructing new ideas (Zheng et al., 2019). More recent definitions broaden the scope of CL to encompass online and blended learning environments, where collaboration takes place through digital platforms and interactive tools (Zhao et al., 2020).

Changes towards digital and hybrid teaching environment, especially quick Covid-19 epidemic, changed the modes of implementation of CL in higher education (Jhao et al., 2020). Studies show that technology plays an important role in supporting asynchronous and synchronized cooperation among students. Google Docs, Zoom and Microsoft teams such as platforms have become an integral part of the work support, facilitate the response of peers, and promote interactions in distant learning scenarios (Zhang and U, 2021).

In addition, recent developments in CL emphasize the importance of intercultural and multilingual cooperation. With the rise of the international student population in higher education, CL strategies are rapidly designed to include students of separate language and cultural environment (Abdullah et al., 2021). This trend is in line with the global nature of today's educational institutions, where cooperation on boundaries is necessary to support the inclusive educational environment.

The Impact of Collaborative Learning in Higher Education

Research between 2018 and 2024 suggests that CL positively affects academic and social skills (Liu et al., 2022). The CL supports a deeper understanding of content because students are actively involved in the learning process than in passive information receiving (Wang et al., 2020). Students involved in CL activities will more often develop critical thinking skills because they negotiate meaningfully and prevent their thoughts in connection with group discussions (Sharma & Sharma, 2021).

In addition, CL has proved to improve the inspiration and engagement of students. Zheng et al. (2019) found that in the establishment of group work, the students reported more satisfaction with their learning experience. CL's social character

forces students to be responsible for their own learning and helps their peers which create a community of students who actively engage in their academic achievements.

Nonetheless, the CL development came with no issues. Various researchers have highlighted group dynamics issues, including unbalanced participation, conflict resolution and logistics coordination of classroom activities, especially in huge classes or entirely online environments (Razak et al., 2019).

Collaborative Learning and Language Acquisition

Collaborative learning (CL) has been one of the most effective approaches to language acquisition, especially in the improvement of English language proficiency (ELP). CL fosters interaction, communication, and knowledge co-construction, all key to learning a new language (Vygotsky, 1978). As Language acquisition is social in nature, CL takes advantage by facilitating peer-to-peer interaction that increases learners' exposure to the target language (Sharma & Sharma, 2021). Students are motivated to have meaningful discussions, use language in authentic situations, and provide mutual assistance in learning new linguistic structures and vocabulary. Resultantly, collaborative learning facilitates the acquisition of both receptive (listening and reading) and productive (speaking and writing) language skills.

Through group work, students are likely to be subjected to various models of language as well as differing outlooks, thereby contributing to their exposure in the usage of language (Li & Kang, 2020). Through group discussions or collaborative writing tasks, students negotiate meaning, clear confusion, enrich comprehension and the use of target language (Razak et al., 2019).

English Language Proficiency (ELP) Through CL

CL not only fosters overall language learning but also influences the very constituents of ELP directly. Collaborative processes, including group discussion and peer feedback, enhance fluency, accuracy, and overall language proficiency (Zhang & Yu, 2021). This especially holds true within higher education institutions, where proficiency in ELP is deemed paramount for academic success. In collaborative environments, learners are able to use academic vocabulary, get immediate peer feedback, and collaborate in addressing language problems (Le et al., 2018).

When students learn together, they are more motivated and have greater ownership of learning. With this higher motivation level, there is a greater active engagement and persistence in language acquisition, leading to better ELP (Sharma & Sharma, 2021). The social component of CL also mitigates language anxiety. As students feel encouraged by fellow students in collaborative tasks, it results in developing greater confidence in the usage of language in both formal and informal situations (Wang et al., 2020).

Sociocultural Theory and Collaborative Learning

The socio-cultural theory smoothly copes with the principles of CL. Vygotsky's theory emphasis on social interaction as a driver of cognitive development has been supported by many modern strategies for learning collaboration. In obtaining languages, socio-cultural theory suggests that pupils benefit from the tasks of collaboration, because language learning is mediated by social dialogue (Wertsch, 1985). When pupils are involved in discussions like group work or sessions of feedback, they are able to internalize language skills through collaborative scaffolding, where peers and teachers provide support to students to achieve a higher level of professional competence (Liu et al., 2022).

During the revision of Vygotsky's theories, modern researchers have expanded their application to integrate the digital and multicultural educational environment. Digital platforms facilitate cooperating interactions in both synchronous and asynchronous modes and extend the range of opportunities for meaningful language use. As learners from various linguistic contexts engage in collaboration activities, interaction not only enhances their English awareness, but also enhances their capacity to operate within a globalized communication environment (Zhang & Yu, 2021). This application of Vygotsky's theory concepts for contemporary educational technology presents the permanent relevance of socio-cultural theory for contemporary education.

Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory is highly applicable in the field of contemporary education industry, especially language education and cooperation. The attention of theory on social interaction, Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) and scaffolding provide a strong base to understand how students develop English knowledge through cooperation. In the revision and expansion of Vygotsky work, modern researchers have adapted their ideas to the environment of digital learning and multicultural classrooms, which shows the lasting impact of socio-cultural theory on contemporary pedagogy.

Key Concepts of Social Constructivism

1. **Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD):** One of Vygotsky's most influential concepts, the ZPD refers to the difference between what learners can achieve independently and what they can accomplish with the guidance of a more knowledgeable other (teacher, peer, or mentor) (Vygotsky, 1978). In this zone, learners receive scaffolding to support their development, which is gradually removed as they gain independence.
2. **Scaffolding:** The scaffolding refers to the temporary support provided by teachers or colleagues to help the learners achieve the tasks that they cannot complete on their own. This support is gradually removed as the learner's profit capacity (wood et al., 1976).
3. **Social Interaction:** Learning is mediation through social interaction. Vygotsky argued that cognitive development is influenced by interaction with others, and that internal idea processes are shaped by external social experiences (Wirtsch, 1985).
4. **Cultural Tools and Mediation:** Social creations attach great importance to devices (language, symbols, artifacts) that learners use to create an understanding of the world. These cultural equipment mediate thinking and learning, the way individuals are shaped to engage with new knowledge (Vygotsky, 1978).

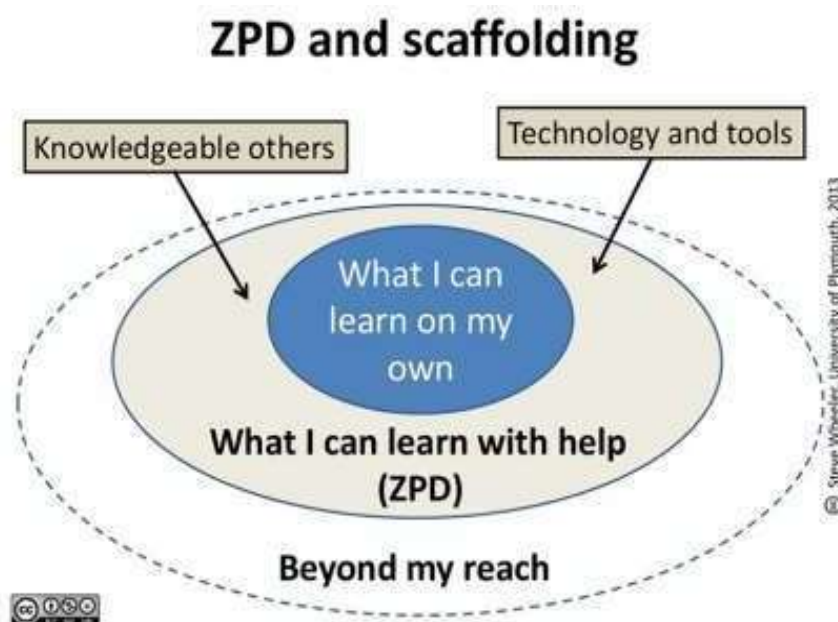
Social Constructivism in Language Learning

When teaching languages, social constructivist approaches emphasize communication and collaboration as central for acquiring language skills. Pupils co-create knowledge by engaging in meaningful conversations, tasks in solving problems and joint activities with peers and teachers. Language learning is perceived as a socially mediated process where students develop linguistic competence through interaction, negotiating the meaning and the use of language in authentic social contexts (Swain, 2000).

For example, the task of collaboration, such as group discussions or sessions of mutual evaluation in the language class, reflects the principles of social constructivism. In these activities, students cooperate in building understanding, providing feedback and together create knowledge. More tax members can provide scaffolding to support less skilled students and help them achieve a higher level of language competence within their ZPD (Swain, 2000).

Key Differences Between Constructivist and Social Constructivist Theories

Aspect	Constructivism	Social Constructivism
Focus	Individual cognitive development	Social and cultural influences on learning
Role of Interaction	Internal, self-directed processes	Central to learning, with emphasis on collaboration
Role of the Teacher	Facilitator of discovery learning	Active participant who guides and scaffolds
Learning Environment	Constructed by the learner through interaction with materials	Constructed through social interactions and cultural tools



(<https://www.simplypsychology.org/vygotsky.html>.)

Figure1: Theoretical framework that incorporates collaborative group learning

Significance of the Study

The English language has become a Lingua Franca and gaining proficiency in it is considered vital for success in higher education as well as in international job market. The purpose of the study is to find out how the associate learning strategy can develop students' English language proficiency skills, especially in listening, reading and writing (Salamanti et al., 2023). Traditional language learning approaches are often based on teacher-centered instructions or rote learning especially in public sector universities of Southern Punjab. By examining the effects of collaborative learning strategies, the study provides insight into a more interactive and student-focused teaching methods, resulting in creative engagement and high language retention of students. This study is an attempt to provide an in-depth understanding of how collaborative strategies can enhance language learning proficiency, leading to overall academic performance as well as students' holistic development (Yang, 2023). This study may prove beneficial for the teachers and learners to practice collaborative language learning techniques in a more productive and better ways in higher education institutions. The results of the study may also prove beneficial for the curriculum developers hence they can devise policies accordingly by incorporating collaborative learning-related activities in English language curricula. Besides, the study may offer an in-depth insight to English language educators globally on how to efficiently implement collaborative learning strategies to boost English language proficiency of students at higher institutions.

Research Methodology

The study adopted an experimental approach with one group pre-test, post-test design.

To evaluate the effectiveness of collaborative learning strategies on students' English language proficiency, a pre-test–post-test experimental design was implemented. A sample of 40 students from the BS English program at NUML University was

selected using simple random sampling. Participation was voluntary, and a standardized English proficiency test—adapted from the Vietnam National University English Proficiency Test (VNU-EPT)—was administered as both the pre-test and post-test. Throughout the fall semester of 2024, collaborative learning strategies were introduced, including structured group work, collaborative writing tasks, and interactive peer discussions. Paired-sample t-tests were employed to compare pre- and post-test scores to measure the significance of improvement in students' reading, writing, and listening skills.

Quantitative data, from the experimental were analyzed through SPSS version 27. Descriptive statistics such as percentages, frequencies, means, and standard deviations were employed in addition to inferential statistics, specifically paired-sample t-tests, to test for the relationship and impacts of CLS on English language competence.

Experimental Research intervention

The aim of the study was to measure the effects of collaborative learning strategies on the knowledge of the English language of students through a controlled experimental study. Experimental design was used before and after the test with one group of 40 students. Same group was given a preliminary test to assess their basic knowledge of listening, reading, writing and speaking. Then group had undergone one semester (6 months) interventions using collaborative learning strategies such as mutual discussions, group activities and shared writing exercises. After the intervention, the post-test was identified identical to the preliminary test to evaluate the differences in language skills on the same group of 40 students. This study ensured a systematic comparison of results and isolated the effects of strategies of collaborative learning. (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017).

Population

The target population for the study included students from public sector universities in South Punjab, Pakistan. The student population consisted of individuals enrolled in the BS English program during the academic year 2022–2026. The population of the study consisted of students from the English language departments of public sector universities located in South Punjab, Pakistan. Specifically, it included all BS English students enrolled during the 2022–2026 academic session and all faculty members teaching in English departments. The total population comprised 3,987 students, Emerson University Multan (750 students), National University of Modern Languages (NUML) (430 students), Bahauddin Zakariya University (BZU) (400 students), The Women University Multan (800 students), Ghazi University Dera Ghazi Khan (432 students), The Islamia University of Bahawalpur (975 students), and Khawaja Farid University Rahim Yar Khan (200 students). All these institutions are recognized by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan.

Validity and Reliability

Expert Review

The research tools employed in this study underwent a rigorous validation process by multiple field experts. The tool was originally adopted from reliable sources and later adapted to the specific objectives and reference of the study. Overall, experts considered the equipment appropriate and generally validated for data collection.

However, they made many important observations about the practicality and clarity of the equipment. While experts confirmed the acceptance of the instrument, they expressed concern about their length and complexity. Suggestions include simplifying the language and reducing length to understand the equipment for the target population and reduce length.

The English proficiency test was recognized as a valid means to assess students in four language skills – listening, speaking, reading and writing. However, experts recommended that listening and speaking components be administered to allow for more intensive and concentrated evaluation in separate sessions. Additionally, he proposed minor amendments in the hearing section to improve its effectiveness and clarity.

The inclusion of this specialist response has increased the overall strength, clarity and purpose of research equipment. All suggested amendments were applied, ensuring that the equipment is not only valid and reliable but also practical and user-friendly. These refinements contribute to the integrity and rigor of research, ensuring that the equipment aligns well with both educational standards and realities of research reference.

Pilot Study

A pilot study with 20 participants was carried out outside the main sample to ensure the quality and efficiency of research instruments (Bryman, 2016; Takerdoost, 2016). The primary objective of the pilot study was to identify any potential deficiencies in the tools, ensure the clarity and suitability of the questionnaire items and test the reliability of the questionnaire through the analysis of items to measure internal consistency. This preliminary step helped specify the tools before their implementation in the main study.

Table 1 *Pilot Testing*

Sr#	Description	No. of Items	No. of Respondents	Cronbach's Alpha
1	Pilot Testing	100	20	.79

Reliability Measures

After a validation of instrument, it was determined the reliability of instrument. SPSS 21 used to calculate the value of Cronbach's alpha. As the questionnaire was comprised of four sections, so the Cronbach's alpha was calculated section wise as well as for overall questionnaire. The value of Cronbach's alpha was .79.

Pretest and Posttest Analysis of Students

Table 2 Student wise Comparison of Pretest and Posttest Score Regarding Effects of Collaborative Learning Strategies on English Language Proficiency Skills

Sr.	Pretest Score	Posttest Score	Sr.	Pretest Score	Posttest Score	Sr.	Pretest Score	Posttest Score
Student-1	59	83	Student-15	68	83	Student-29	59	83
Student-2	70	75	Student-16	62	75	Student-30	65	75
Student-3	65	77	Student-17	64	77	Student-31	64	83
Student-4	67	82	Student-18	59	82	Student-32	66	82
Student-5	68	81	Student-19	59	81	Student-33	63	79
Student-6	62	83	Student-20	65	83	Student-34	67	79
Student-7	64	78	Student-21	59	78	Student-35	56	80
Student-8	59	83	Student-22	70	83	Student-36	61	78
Student-9	59	75	Student-23	65	75	Student-37	61	78
Student-10	65	77	Student-24	67	77	Student-38	65	83
Student-11	59	82	Student-25	68	82	Student-39	55	82
Student-12	70	81	Student-26	62	81	Student-40	63	79
Student-13	65	83	Student-27	64	83			
Student-14	67	78	Student-28	59	78			

Table represents a student comparison of the score of preliminary and post test scores for assessing the effects of collaborative learning strategies on English language skills. The data clearly indicates continuous improvement in the score for all 40 students after the implementation of cooperation. The initial score was mostly between 59 and 70, while the posttest score has improved significantly, most of the students have scored between 75 and 83. This ascending trend reflects the positive effects of strategies on the language knowledge of students, suggesting that such approaches increase English participation, understanding and application in higher education.

Table 3 Skills wise Comparison of Pretest and Posttest Average Score Regarding Effects of Collaborative Learning Strategies on English Language Proficiency Skills

Description	Pretest Score	Posttest Score
Reading skills	15.73	18.00
Writing skills	25.68	33.78
Listening skills	10.08	12.45
Speaking skills	11.90	15.70
Mean Score	63.38	79.93
Total Score	100	100

Table represents a skill comparison of the average score of preliminary and the most successful scores, emphasizing the impact of collaborative learning strategies on different English knowledge components. Results suggest that all four skills significantly improve. The reading skills have improved on an average from 15.73 to 18.00, the skill writing skills from 25.68 to 33.78, listening from 10.08 to 12.45 and speaking from 11.90 to 15.70. The total average score increased significantly from 63.38 in the initial testing, by 79.93 in the post test, suggesting that the cooperation of learning had a significant positive impact on the expertise of the student in all areas of English. These findings suggest that the strategies of cooperation are effective in increasing the broad language development of students of higher education.

Analysis at the Basis of Hypothesis (Inferential Statistics)

H₀: Collaborative learning strategies have no significant effect on students' English Learning Proficiency skills at higher education institutions in pretest and posttest scores.

Table 4 Paired Sample t-test Showing Differences in pre-test and post -test scores of Collaborative Learning Strategies Effect on Students' English Learning Proficiency Skills

Tests	M	N	SD	t-value	Df	Sig.
Pretest	63.3750	40	3.88744	-21.142	39	.000
Posttest	79.9250	40	2.84098			

*P < .05 Level of Significance

The table represents the results of a paired T-Test sample performed to detect the difference between the initial and posttest score in the context of the impact of collaborative learning strategies on English language skills. The average score increased from 63.38 to 3.88 and 2.84 with standard deviations to 79.93 in the preliminary testing. T -21,142 shows a statistically significant difference between two sets of scores with levels of 39 degrees of independence and 0.000 (P < 0.05). Therefore, a

zero hypothesis (H_0) is rejected, stating that the cooperative learning strategy does not have a significant impact. This result confirms that the coaching strategy of learning increases the knowledge of English among students of higher education.

H_0 : Collaborative learning strategies have no significant effect on students' reading skills at higher education institutions in pretest and posttest scores.

Table 5 Paired Sample *t*-test Showing Differences in pre-test and post –test scores of Collaborative learning strategies effect on students' reading skills

Tests	<i>M</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Pretest	15.7250	40	1.21924	-8.987	39	.000
Posttest	18.0000	40	1.30089			

* $P < .05$ Level of Significance

Table shows the results of the paired sample of the T-test to assess the impact of the strategies of collaborative learning on the reading skills of students by comparing preliminary and posttest scores. The average score for reading skills increased from 15.73 in a preliminary test to 18.00 V posttest, with standard deviations of 1.22 and 1.30. The value of T -8,987 with 39 degrees of freedom and significance levels of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$) indicates a statistically significant improvement in reading skills after the introduction of collaborative learning strategies. The zero hypothesis (H_0), which does not indicate any significant effect, is therefore rejected. These findings confirm that the strategies of collaborative learning positively and significantly affect students 'readers' skills on higher education institutions.

H_0 : Collaborative learning strategies have no significant effect on students' writing skills at higher education institutions in pretest and posttest scores.

Table 6 Paired Sample *t*-test Showing Differences in pre-test and post –test scores of Collaborative learning strategies effect on students' writing skills

Tests	<i>M</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Pretest	25.6750	40	2.73990	-15.224	39	.000
Posttest	33.7750	40	2.10600			

* $P < .05$ Level of Significance

Table represents the results of a paired T-test sample to evaluate the effect of collaborative learning strategies on the skill of writing students. The average writing score increased significantly from the 25.68 in the preliminary test to 33.78 in the posttest. The standard deviation has decreased from 2.74 in the 2.11 test, indicating greater consistency of students' performance after intervention. T - -15.224 and significance levels of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$) provide strong evidence against null hypothesis. It can therefore be concluded that the strategy of learning collaborative learning has a significant positive impact on the skills of writing students in university institutions.

H_0 : Collaborative learning strategies have no significant effect on students' listening skills at higher education institutions in pretest and posttest scores.

Table 7 Paired Sample *t*-test Showing Differences in pre-test and post –test scores of Collaborative learning strategies effect on students' listening skills

Tests	<i>M</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Pretest	10.0750	40	1.26871	-6.853	39	.000
Posttest	12.4500	40	1.63221			

* $P < .05$ Level of Significance

Table shows the results of the paired sample of the T-test analysis of the impact of the strategies of collaborative learning on the listening skills of students. The average score increased from 10.08 in the test to 12.45 in Potest, reflecting a remarkable improvement. T -values -6,853 and significance level of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$) indicate a statistically significant difference between preliminary and posttest scores. The zero hypothesis is therefore rejected, which confirms that the strategy of collaborative learning has a significant and positive impact on strengthening students of students at university institutions.\

H_0 : Collaborative learning strategies have no significant effect on students' speaking skills at higher education institutions in pretest and posttest scores.

Table 8 Paired Sample *t*-test Showing Differences in pre-test and post –test scores of Collaborative learning strategies effect on students' speaking skills

Tests	<i>M</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Pretest	11.9000	40	1.31656	-11.566	39	.000
Posttest	15.7000	40	1.47109			

* $P < .05$ Level of Significance

Table represents the results of a paired T-test sample exploring the influence of collaborative learning strategies on the skill of students' speaking. The average score increased from 11.90 in a preliminary test to 15.70 in Potest, indicating a significant improvement. The calculated t -rated -11.566 with a significance level of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$) shows a statistically significant difference between the two sets of the score. As a result, the zero hypothesis is rejected, which confirms that the strategy of collaborative learning significantly increases students' skills at university institutions.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical ideas are essential to ensure the integrity of the study. All research related to humans should follow a moral protocol. The current study also followed all relevant moral guidelines, such as taking prior permission from respondents for the study and maintaining confidentiality of information taken, such as participants' names, places and other personal information. The researcher explained research objectives to all participants before starting the process of data collection to achieve their confidence. Student's time facility was ensured for data collection. The research subject did not touch on any sensitive or moral issues for respondents. The study is considered voluntary as participation in the study; therefore, participants had the right to withdraw.

Findings at the Basis of Pretest and Posttest Analysis of Students

- When comparing the scores before and after the intervention, all 40 students showed improvement in their English language skills, which proves that working together in groups really helps in learning English.
- Looking at the skills, all four areas of English improved a lot.
- Reading went up from 15.73 to 18.00, writing from 25.68 to 33.78, listening from 10.08 to 12.45, and speaking from 11.90 to 15.70. This shows that working together in groups has a strong effect on all parts of language learning. (Table 5)
- The average score of all students went up from 63.38 before the intervention to 79.93 after, showing that working in groups makes a great difference in how well students learn English.
- A test comparing the scores before and after showed a big difference ($t = -21.142$, $p = .000$), which means that working together helped students improve their overall English skills a lot.
- The average score for reading went up a lot (from 15.73 to 18.00). Paired sample t-test ($t = -8.987$, $p = .000$) showed that working together really helped students get better at reading.
- Writing improved the most, with scores going from 25.68 to 33.78. Paired sample t-test ($t = -15.224$, $p = .000$) showed that working in groups is very effective for improving writing skills.
- Listening skills also improved a lot (from 10.08 to 12.45). Paired sample t-test ($t = -6.853$, $p = .000$) showed that group learning helps students understand spoken English better.
- Speaking skills also improved a lot (from 11.90 to 15.70). Paired sample t-test ($t = -11.566$, $p = .000$) showed that working in groups helps students speak English more confidently.

Discussion

The result of this research strongly corroborates the effectiveness of collaborative learning strategies in boosting learners' English language proficiency. Pretest and posttest scores conclusively show that all 40 learners showed measurable gains in all tested language abilities after the collaborative intervention. The presence of universal improvement is clear evidence of the efficiency of cooperative methods in creating an open and productive learning climate in which all students benefit. Skill-based analysis further confirms that collaborative learning tends to impact, improving reading, writing, listening, and speaking to a larger degree.

The increase in total mean scores—63.38 posttest to 79.93 posttest—also goes to give powerful evidence of the overall efficacy of collaborative strategies. This is also evident from the research by Washington-Nortey et al. (2022), which stated that guided peer collaboration and cooperative exercises yield more effective language acquisition results as students are more engaged and practice authentic communicative action.

Among the four skills, writing recorded the largest growth, where mean scores rose to 33.78 from 25.68 and had an incredibly high t-value significance ($t = -15.224$, $p = .000$). The finding supports earlier research such as Anggraini et al. (2020), which equally stressed the relevance of peer review and collaborative-writing sessions in order to facilitate the students to prepare and present their ideas well using English. The collaborative process appears to give frequent feedback and exposure to various linguistic structures leading to significant writing gain.

Speaking skills also improved importantly, from the mean of 11.90 to 15.70 ($t = -11.566$, $p = .000$). This is supported by Hanh and Huyen (2024), who clarify that peer speaking exercise in group conditions lowers levels of tension and provides a feeling of confidence, thus leading to greater verbal fluency. Reading and listening skill also reached statistically significant improvements, supporting that collaborative learning exposes the learners intensely and more intensively to the language, which is essential for learning the receptive skills (Rianto, 2021).

The statistical validation by paired sample t-tests in all language skill domains further confirms that collaborative learning interventions are most effective. The discovery adds to the growing literature supporting collaborative learning as evidence-based practice in language teaching (Gillies, 2023).

Moreover, the improvement observed is in harmony with the principles of self-regulated learning. The results concur with Sartania et al.'s (2022) argument that peer learning not only enhances language skills but also intrinsic motivation and self-regulation in students. This result is significant since it illustrates how peer learning evokes autonomous learning behaviors—a central component of the constructivist paradigm (Erbil, 2020).

But while there are such benefits, the research is also able to determine numerous practical challenges for educators to implement collaborative methods. Diverse skill levels among students, limited timescales, and numerous students were the

most frequently cited reasons for being a hindrance—findings echoed also in the report of Le et al. (2018) and once again substantiated by Aranzabal et al. (2022), who remarked on the difficulty of reasonable assessment of individual contribution in group settings. Such issues point to how much potential collaborative learning has, but only if success with it rests in adequate planning, resourcing, and having small class sizes. Brulles and Brown (2018) also argued that without such support mechanisms, the real application of collaborative methods can fall short of what is possible.

The results confirm again that collaborative learning is a productive pedagogy enhancing significantly students' English language proficiency across the key skills. They contribute to further evidence of the double benefit of such methods to enhance learning outcomes as well as the capacity of the learners to self-regulate. However, the challenges shown confirm the need to support institutions to secure the maximization of the effectiveness of collaborative practices in different learning environments.

Conclusion

The objective of this research was to evaluate the existing level of students' English proficiency, determine the effects of collaborative learning strategies on skills, analyze teachers' practices in implementing strategies and provide suggestions to increase their use in higher education institutions. The results suggest that, while students' level of proficiency in English is lower than the average, the associate learning approach has found an effective means to develop language skills, especially in speaking and writing. Such approaches improved all four language skills, in which students are making significant progress, especially in writing. Teachers said that colleague activities like group discussion and project-based learning have increased significantly in student engagement, flow and vocabulary, which contributed to overall language development.

Finally, research asks to support the practice of cooperative learning strategies for institutional reforms. Recommendations suggested are restructuring to incorporate colleague reactions and group work, reducing class sizes, including increased resources for technology-based learning and making professional development programs to empower teachers with necessary skills. Institutional support, such as encouraging the culture of cooperation and encouragement for teamwork, was seen as a core for long-term success. Setting with these practical and structural problems will not only enhance the attitude of collaborative learning but will also lead to overall educational experience and attainment for students in higher education institutions.

5.5 Recommendations

- Institutions need to take initiative to create a culture of cooperation by providing encouragement and assistance for allies. The interdepartmental cooperation can provide the facility to include collaborative teaching models in the course. Additionally, creating a formally structure that maintains cooperation through shared resources and administrative support, can make cooperative learning a long-term practice in higher education institutions.
- Regularly organized faculty development programs are important for teachers' collaborative learning strategies to increase the ability to use more effectively. Institutes need to invest in regular training sessions aimed at equipping teachers with the latest educational practices, teaching technologies and collaborative equipment. Teachers can better convenient the development of language learning of students and provide more attractive learning environment, making teachers more competent in managing the dynamics of the group and using several instructional strategies.
- Small classes require the size of small class to determine the environment of skilled associate learning. Small classes allow teachers to pay more time and attention in students, ensuring that each learner actively participates in group activities. Teachers can closely monitor the engagement and performance of students while handling small classes, resulting in better learning experiences and students can be able to achieve more efficiently through interactions with peers.

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