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Collaborative Activities in English Language Classrooms: A review of Secondary Schools in Pakistan

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Abstract

Collaborative learning is a method of teaching and learning in which groups of students work together to complete a task, solve an issue, or create a product. Objectives of the study was to assess the collaborative learning activities in English language leaning at secondary school level. Research questions of the study were; What Is the attitude of teachers towards using collaborative activities in classroom? How collaborative learning strategies effects on students learning at secondary level? What are the challenges that teachers face during collaborative activities in the class? Researcher used a mixed method approach and employed interpretive methods. Researcher used the self-completion questionnaire to get a picture of the wider situation across the participants, identify different phenomena among them, and then explore these phenomena in more depth during semi- structured interviews. 170 participants, who were promised confidentiality, anonymity, and non-traceability, were purposively sampled from targeted population for quantitative data. 12 participants were selected for interview for qualitative data. The majority of participants have a positive attitude toward Collaborative learning activities. The majority of teachers cited collaborative work as a means to motivate students to learn, foster interaction, boost self-esteem, and encourage participation and contribution throughout the lesson. Further study found that respondents encounter difficulties when organizing collaborative endeavors, including overseeing students' adherence to tasks, organizing time for collaborative work, supplying pertinent materials, designating individual responsibilities, and fostering teamwork attitudes and conduct.

Introduction

A variety of instructional strategies are employed by teachers to motivate students to learn. In order to increase the efficacy of their instruction and learning, educators employ a variety of distinct strategies, methods, and tactics (Fu and Hwang, 2018). An increase in student concentration is observed, accompanied by a more pleasurable learning environment. An increased comprehension of the varied backgrounds, learning levels, and requirements of students by educators enhances the effectiveness and significance of the teaching-learning process.

When the learning process is centred on the learner, successful learning occurs in the context of English language learning (ELL). Effective communication with English language learners (ELLs) is attainable when instructors employ a variety of tactics and strategies that are suitable for the learners. In the ELL classroom, ELT instructors must forsake conventional practices and implement innovative methods and strategies (Agustin et al., 2021). Educators ought to prioritise the needs and interests of their pupils, and they ought to engage students in collaborative endeavours such as partner or group projects to enhance their understanding and learning proficiencies. When students engage in a variety of classroom activities, such as group projects or tasks, each participant contributes something to the designated task, resulting in fruitful outcomes. Given that effective outcomes are the objective of collaborative learning, it is advisable for English as a Second Language (ELT) instructors to integrate this approach into their routine lessons.

As opposed to merely being a classroom technique, collaborative learning (CL) is an individual notion (Kato et al., 2015). When people are gathered in groups, it suggests a method of interacting with them that is respectful and highlights the strengths and contributions of each individual. Members take accountability and share authority for every collective action (Qureshi et al., 2023). Collaborative learning relies on the cooperation of its constituents. For Education for Sustainable Development to be implemented effectively, appropriate teaching-learning methodologies must be chosen and implemented. Collaborative learning is an instructional approach wherein cohorts of learners engage in joint effort to resolve challenges, complete assignments, or create new materials (Papamitsiou and Economides, 2018). According to the Collaborative Learning (CL) theory, learning takes place through social interactions. As part of this social act, participants engage in conversation with one another to complete learning assignments. CL is an instructional methodology wherein cohorts of learners work together to devise solutions to challenges, accomplish objectives, or develop products (Van Leeuwen and Janssen, 2019). Collaborative learning (CL) activities include pair and group work, which suggests that cooperative learning classes generally consist of students engaging in knowledge sharing while working in pairs or groups to effectively accomplish learning objectives.

Problem Statement

The majority of CL research focuses on how CL affects primary and university students' academic performance. Few of these studies looked at secondary school teachers' perceptions on collaborative learning. Some studies have concentrated on young learners' perceptions of CL, while others have focused on high school students' perceptions of CL (Nair et al., 2012). Alghamdi and Gillies (2013) explore male 10th grade students' perspectives of CL, while Mulryon (1994) investigates 5th and 6th grade kids' attitudes of group work. Others explore how adult learners perceive CL (Lee and Macaro, 2013; Moore, 2013; Sarobol, 2012; Tian and Macaro, 2012). Unlike earlier studies, this one focuses on teachers' impressions of collaborative learning at the secondary level, with a particular emphasis on collaborative activities. Thus, the purpose of this study is to look into English-language instructors' perceptions of collaborative learning at the secondary level.

Significance of the Study

This study will be significant for all educational stakeholders including, teachers, students, administration, policy makers and curriculum developers. Teachers will get to know about the

benefits of collaborative learning styles and will better prepare themselves for multiple collaborative activities for the effective teaching process. Moreover, students will also get to know the importance of learning with others and they will develop a positive attitude towards learning jointly with their fellows. Furthermore, curriculum developers will develop syllabus accordance with the collaborative activities to satisfy the students' needs. In addition, this study will help the head and administration of educational institutions to provide opportunities and resources to effectively carry out collaborative learning activities.

Research Objectives

Objectives of the study were to:

1. Investigate the attitude of teachers towards using collaborative activities in classroom.
2. Explore the effects of collaborative learning strategies on students learning.
3. Assess the challenges that teachers face during collaborative activities in the class.

Research Questions

Research questions of the study were:

1. What Is the attitude of teachers towards using collaborative activities in classroom?
2. How collaborative learning strategies effects on students learning at secondary level?
3. What are the challenges that teachers face during collaborative activities in the class?

Literature Review

Collaborative learning is an instructional approach wherein cohorts of learners devise solutions to problems, accomplish assignments, or develop products collectively. Students learn significantly from their peers, share their knowledge, and feel more comfortable when working in groups. Students who are falling behind academically can still achieve success when given group assignments (Herrera-Pavo, 2021). In collaborative learning, students engage in group work in accordance with their individual preferences, which motivates them to accomplish the task with increased zeal. Consequently, they are presented with numerous opportunities to excel in the duties that have been delegated to them; such accomplishments foster more advantageous collaborative learning (Dimitracopoulou, 2017). Collaborative learning additionally facilitates the completion of tasks more efficiently and rapidly by means of time, energy, and tension savings that result from group work. Participants in collaborative learning groups experience heightened motivation and a greater sense of ease and autonomy when it comes to task completion (Chen and Yu, 2019). In addition to gaining self-satisfaction from completing the activities, the students derive gratification from discussing them with their peers. Moreover, as the learners' confidence levels increase, they make strides towards achieving learner autonomy.

Collaborative Learning Strategies

Jigsaw

Learners form home-base groups. Individual members of the base group depart to learn about a specific component of a topic while participating in a temporary group. They then return to their base groups and teach each of their members about their assigned topics. To encourage both individual and group responsibility, groups are frequently examined by quizzing a random member (Retnowati et al., 2017).

Round Robin

The teacher instructs the groups to communicate their findings or thoughts to the entire class, either on paper or vocally. This is a simple approach to promote idea sharing and piggybacking. Round robin is used when results need to be shared quickly, such as after a science lab or a Web or database search (Ansari and Khan, 2020).

Think, Pair, Share (TPS)

The teacher divides students into pairs. TPS is a simple and brief process that involves thinking about a problem, writing down a solution, and sharing it with a partner or partners before discussing it in front of the entire class. TPS, like many cooperative tactics, facilitates learners' ability to share ideas with the entire group because they have already shared them with a partner (Johnson and Johnson, 2018). TPS is useful for a variety of tasks, including story writing, topic generation, and alternative solutions. Numbered heads. Numbered heads is more of an assessment and distribution activity than anything else; it assigns group members a number that can be used to poll or allocate roles later.

Numbered Heads

Numbered heads should be utilised whenever it is necessary to fairly choose members of a group for quizzing or assigning responsibilities. The numbers would also be useful in a puzzle setting (Monteiro and Morrison, 2018).

Turn To Your Neighbour

With this method, the work is largely immaterial, but it should be modest and straightforward. KidPub allows children to showcase their work to others. NASA combines materials, initiatives, and expertise. Apply a review or summary. Simply instruct students to turn to the next person and explain what they've been working on (Al-Rahmi and Zeki, 2017). Other instances are two students swiftly summarising the results of computer-based search tactics or their graphical representations of a problem using a spreadsheet and charts.

Role Assignment

Assigning roles to students such as encourager, devil's advocate, summarizer, initiator, optimist, and pessimist is a simple yet effective way to encourage group debate on topics. The researcher would explore using this to initiate a group discussion about a current subject or to ignite a chapter discussion in small groups (Ansell & Gash, 2018).

Phillips 66

Six people talk about a topic for six minutes. Then, a leader communicates crucial points to the other groups.

Benefits of Collaborative Learning

In collaborative learning, people work in small groups to do the same task. It is an educational strategy in which students produce knowledge via group discussions (Mattor et al., 2020). As so, the learner becomes the centre of attention in instruction. By working together to achieve a common objective, students participate in the sharing of ideas and expand their knowledge. Furthermore, as a means of achieving consensus, students engage in meaningful discussions on the subject and provide thorough explanations (Adachi et al., 2018). Although the principles of cooperation and collaboration are similar, cooperative learning involves giving each student a distinct task to complete. In contrast, collaborative learning entails having students work together to complete the same assignment in order to improve knowledge.

Critical thinking is fostered via collaborative learning practices, according to a number of research. Collaborative learning proponents assert that students' ability to analyse and synthesise arguments is enhanced by the development of critical thinking abilities. There's also the argument that pupils with strong critical thinking skills contribute significantly to group projects. Additionally, collaborative learning is thought to enhance students' metacognition (Kato et al., 2015). The understanding and control of one's own cognitive and educational processes by youngsters is known as metacognition. The ability for pupils to identify their own mental processes is another advantage of metacognitive skills, which can help them refine their viewpoints and concepts. Learners' motivation is increased through collaborative techniques. According to ("Collaborative Learning," 2020), motivation is the enjoyment of academic work marked by a mastery orientation, curiosity, tenacity, task-endogeny, and the accomplishment of demanding, uncommon, and difficult tasks. According to this approach, working together with others improves performance and fosters personal engagement.

A significant body of research has established the benefits of CL for student learning. Students who work alone do worse on tasks involving higher-order thinking and remember material for a shorter amount of time than those who work in collaborative teams, according to research by Liu, Q. T., Liu, B. W., and Lin, Y. R. (2019). Moreover, these researchers assert that CL explains individual variances in the classroom. Similarly, Azizinezhad et al. (2013) claim that CL can improve higher level thinking. Improvement of "higher order" learning skills through peer partnerships" and listing the following skills: "deciding, bargaining, understanding, organising, applying learned information in unfamiliar contexts, clarifying, ignoring, reproducing, and overcoming obstacles." Students who collaborate do better academically and retain more of what they have learned. Furthermore, Gokhale's (1995) experimental study at Western Illinois University with 48 undergraduate students found that CL (1) promotes the growth of students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills and (2) raises their motivation in learning (Rodriguez, 2018).

Totten, Sills, Digby, and Russ (1999) found that students gain from CL in three ways: (1) they engage in debates; (2) they embrace personal responsibility for their education; and (3) they strengthen their critical thinking skills. Students' reading comprehension increased as a result of CL. CL has an impact on children's social skills, learning, and classroom interactions. For example, it strengthened the acceptance of handicapped children by non-disabled peers and

encouraged effective social communication skills among delinquent adolescent girls. It also improved task-related contact among youngsters (Umar et al., 2020). In a setting that some people frequently view as repressive, uncaring, alienating, or hostile, CL has the ability to give pupils a natural support system. "Deeper level learning, critical thinking, shared understanding, long-term retention of the learned material, opportunities for developing social and communication skills, developing positive attitudes towards co-members and learning material, building social relationships and group cohesion, effectiveness of social construction of CL," Citing a number of researchers, Kreijns, Kirschner, and Jochems (2003) listed the advantages of CL. A study was carried out by Puspitasari (2017) to find out how college students felt about CL. According to the research, a sizeable percentage of students "assess academic advantages including enhanced performance and comprehension, in addition to acquiring general-purpose competencies like improved communication and problem-solving capabilities." Furthermore, about half of the participants claimed to have developed social skills.

Importance of CL In Preparing Pupils For Job

Beyond the classroom, the advantages of CL extend to the workplace. In fact, students are "prepared to deal with increasingly complex workplace processes and problems" through the curriculum. In a similar vein, the study conducted by Musa, Mufti, Abdul Latiff, and Mohamed Amin (2011) examined a sample of 29 second-year university students selected at random. The researchers reached the conclusion that project-based learning, grounded in CL, promotes the transfer and integration of practical skills required in the workplace, including but not limited to teamwork, conflict resolution, decision making, and communication (Stover and Holland, 2018). In addition to these capabilities, individuals have become more self-reliant, assured, and productive in generating and exchanging ideas, according to the researchers. "If teamwork is to be encouraged in future organisations, teamwork skills and experience must be incorporated into our educational programmes," states the M.I.T. Commission on Industrial Productivity. CL is a highly significant and pertinent methodology in an era where organisational achievement is often correlated with collaborative efforts (Ferguson-Patrick, 2018). Additionally, CL prepares students for the workforce across all academic disciplines. The authors present an inventory of the competencies that CL cultivates and which are highly regarded by employers. This inventory comprises cognitive competencies such as information analysis, synthesis, and evaluation, critical thinking and problem-solving capabilities, in addition to numeracy, literacy, and visual communication proficiencies.

Learning Collaboratively in an ELL Environment

Prior to attempting to acquire a second or foreign language, students must have a firm grasp of the language's structure and how to apply it appropriately. When learning English, a Spanish native will develop the habit of appending adjectives to nouns, a practice he should reverse when studying Spanish. In light of the diverse backgrounds of their pupils, educators must initially and foremost establish an inclusive educational setting that fosters a sense of joy, belonging, readiness, and motivation among students to master the curriculum (Abulhassan and Hamid, 2021). Teachers' minuscule efforts to connect with their English language learners (ELLs) while they navigate a different culture and attempt to learn a new language make a significant impact. English classes for ELLs must therefore foster an encouraging environment, as students are significantly more motivated when instructors offer adequate encouragement (Ebru, 2018). ELLs must engage in two activities to improve their English proficiency: devote time to studying and

apply what they have learned. ELLs contribute to their work and explain concepts in English when activities are structured to promote interaction among learners or groups. This feature enables English language instructors to evaluate students' comprehension while also showcasing their advancements in the realm of English language proficiency. The ELL population continues to increase annually. In the United States, for instance, the quantity of ELLs has increased significantly over the past decade. As reported by whom? In more than half of the states, the ELL population has increased by over 100 percent. It demonstrates indisputably how substantially the global total of ELLs has risen, in addition to the United States (Giles and Yazan, 2023). Teachers can facilitate effective learning in English language classes by implementing environmental modifications. Potential modifications could encompass reorganising the seating arrangements, integrating state-of-the-art technology, increasing student engagement in the learning process, employing an array of English teaching approaches and methodologies, allowing mobile device usage during study sessions, and so forth. Moreover, English instructors can facilitate effective learning for ELLs by employing a variety of techniques and strategies to motivate students in traditional classes. Students effectively transition into the process of English language development and engage in active learning of the subject matter when instructors incorporate a variety of activities into the classroom environment (Wijaya, 2021). For this reason, English language instructors must present material in a manner that is accessible to their ELLs so as to facilitate the process of language acquisition. Learners will acquire confidence in their academic pursuits when they experience greater success in overcoming their individual challenges. In order to foster greater adaptability among students, instructors must segment these tasks when they perceive them to be more difficult. The number of ELLs in public institutions in the United States has increased dramatically. The Centre for American Progress reports that between 1997-98 and 2008-2009, the number of ELLs in public institutions in the United States increased by 51%. The TESOL International Association reports that six million English Language Learners (ELLs) are presently enrolled in public institutions in the United States, making this student population the most rapidly expanding (Lailiyah et al., 2021). In light of this, it is necessary to implement equitable measures inside and outside the classroom to ensure that ELLs have an equal opportunity to learn and succeed.

Much of the twenty-first generation of educators is dissatisfied with conventional teaching methods and is more cognizant of contemporary educational trends. An analogous dilemma is present within English language classrooms. To motivate students to learn, English language instructors strive to integrate innovative approaches into the classroom. Additionally, it is found that group or team work fosters an environment conducive to learning, wherein students acquire a greater amount of information and develop their capacity for critical analysis. Consequently, educators endeavour to incorporate these inventive and advantageous approaches into their pedagogical practices with the intention of fostering an enhanced educational milieu for their pupils. For improved outcomes, English language instructors must prescribe specific tasks, given that the principal objective of collaborative learning is to involve ELLs in groups to complete designated tasks. Prior to assigning work in an ELL context, English instructors are frequently required to assess the proficiency levels of the students and furnish appropriate instructions. To facilitate student engagement and seamless completion of allotted tasks, it is imperative that English instructors select topics that are pertinent to the needs and interests of their pupils. Group

learning facilitates greater student comfort with one another. Consequently, English language instructors should promote collaborative learning in environments where English Language Learners (ELLs) are held accountable for their own education and are highly motivated. Active learning is promoted, critical thinking skills are enhanced, and knowledge acquisition techniques are learned through group or partner activities (Shahamat and Mede, 2016). Students are also instructed in the practical application of classroom knowledge. Collaborative learning is the most effective method for instructors to ensure that their students acquire both theory and the practical skills necessary to apply that theory.

In order to facilitate collaborative learning in ELT and ELL environments, English instructors are required to employ a diverse range of activities. These activities may consist of classroom issues, think-pair-share, group projects, debates, activities, group and pair activities, Phillips 66, and case-based learning. Group formation is the foremost consideration that educators must confront when organising collaborative endeavours in the ELL setting.

Which Class Interaction Is Most Beneficial for ELLs?

Question-Response-Feedback and student-led in-person discussions are considered the most beneficial forms of verbal interaction for English Language Learners (ELLs) due to the conducive classroom environment they establish, which nurtures their developing language and cultural competence (Sari, 2019). Despite the fact that both forms of verbal interaction promote ELL engagement, instructors must take into account the students' English proficiency level and devise inquiries that are particularly impactful when interacting with them. At all levels, ELLs benefit from Student-Organized Interaction (Shim and Shur, 2018). It offers students an environment that is relatively unstructured but supportive, where they can practise grammar and vocabulary, as well as rhetorical methods of verbal interaction, under the guidance of native English-speaking classmates and the instructor. ELLs at all proficiency levels—from non-English speakers to those who are proficient—can enhance their auditory comprehension and acquire the ability to execute a range of linguistic functions, such as posing inquiries, seeking clarification, elaborating on meanings, and generating predictions (Walqui and Heritage, 2018). Beginning ELLs and non-native English speakers will benefit from a question-response-feedback format that is structured by the instructor and is supportive in nature. This format emphasises previously covered material, skills, and vocabulary. In order to foster active engagement from these children, educators may permit them to apply their expanding range of nonverbal communication skills—e.g., indicating a location on a map, annotating a diagram with an additional feature, or displaying a calculation on the chalkboard—as a means of responding (Selvaraj & Aziz, 2019). Subsequently, the instructor may employ these authentic nonverbal depictions in order to develop a response in collaboration with the students. Additionally, it is superfluous or ineffectual to concentrate on form at this level, given that the subject matter of the interaction is mathematics or science.

Theoretical Framework

The social constructivist theoretical framework was employed by the researcher to examine the distinctive social aspects of collaborative pedagogy (Armstrong, 2019). This paradigm integrates societal and social pedestals into the process of knowledge construction. In other words, it generates novel insights by drawing inspiration from cultural and societal contexts (Kayii & Akpomi, 2022). This aligns with Vygotsky's (1986) characterization of social constructivism as an approach that integrates environmental tendencies, discourse, interaction, and communication as foundational components of knowledge. This argument bears resemblance to the assertion made by Kukla (2000) that the foundation of knowledge and thought is social production among groups or individuals. More precisely, the three structures are built upon their mode of knowing (Boyland 2019). Furthermore, this aligns with Kim's contention that the social behaviour of individuals serves as a reflection of their own reality. This provided additional evidence that meaning is constructed via conversational interaction with environments. This promotes participation in collaborative efforts to generate novel insights and construct a body of knowledge, while also facilitating an awareness of how individuals' worldviews are shaped through social interactions. This framework requires, from a pedagogical perspective, identifying how students construct meaning in particular contexts. This is a crucial component of the Social Constructionist approach, as it facilitates the discovery of concealed presumptions regarding human conduct and provides students with insight into their latent cultures.

Furthermore, social constructionism may shed light on how cognitive processes influence the actions of distinct actors (individuals), according to some researchers. The following is my thesis, which students may find motivating and which challenges conventional wisdom (Brown and Palincsar, 2018). Conversely, the focal point lies on micro-scale interactions wherein individuals work together towards a shared objective and wherein significance is constructed via social interaction. It could be contended that the potential of Social Constructivism is indistinguishable from the tenets of Collaborative pedagogy (Burr and Dick, 2017). This theory is pertinent to the examination of student concerns regarding collaborative pedagogy as it discerned and elucidated the impact of group discourse and interaction on student learning. In other words, gaining insight into the ways in which individuals orient themselves towards each other, along with the underlying values and assumptions that shape their behaviour, offers a distinct viewpoint on interpersonal connections both inside and outside of educational institutions. Furthermore, this identification serves as evidence that knowledge is formed and maintained through social interactions, thereby offering a fresh outlook on the process of acquiring knowledge (Gergen, 2022). This theory additionally offers valuable insights into the concealed culture of students, denoting their processes of reality comprehension and event interpretation. One could conclude, according to this line of reasoning, that social constructivism is a method that could mitigate the difficulties of collaborative instruction. This is due to the fact that it enables students to disregard any concerns that might affect their social cohesion and collaboration in various knowledge production methodologies.

Additionally, cooperative learning is encouraged because it increases interaction in the classroom. According to Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (1978), language development is facilitated by social interaction among individuals, and learning takes place via collaboration and

interaction. In a similar vein, Vygotsky's zone of proximal development, which pertains to the stage wherein a child fails to independently resolve a problem but ultimately succeeds when an adult is present to supervise, implies that educators have an obligation beyond merely providing an environment conducive to students' independent exploration (Kaliisa et al., 2022).

Explanations, demonstrations, and opportunities for collaborative learning ought to direct students. As postulated by Woolfolk (1998), the language proficiency of learners is enhanced through collaborative efforts and interactions with more proficient learners. Therefore, since cooperative learning enables students to acquire the necessary social support during the learning process, instructors ought to employ partner and group activities that cultivate a nurturing atmosphere conducive to students speaking the target language.

Research Methodology

The methodological position adopted by the researcher is social constructivist. The researcher's epistemological tenets are that knowledge is not imbued with individuals but rather co-constructed with other participants in a social milieu. In essence, the objective of a social constructivist researcher is to comprehend the world of the participants by interpreting their meanings, attitudes, and behaviour. As a result, the researcher employed interpretive methods and a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of teachers' perspectives and attitudes towards CL. Nevertheless, the researcher employed a self-completion questionnaire to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the participants' situation as a whole, discern various phenomena among them, and subsequently delve deeper into these phenomena through semi-structured interviews.

Population and sample

170 participants, who were promised confidentiality, anonymity, and non-traceability, were purposively sampled from targeted population for quantitative data. 12 participants were selected for interview for qualitative data. These participants were advanced English learners. All of these participants completed the self-completion questionnaire. These participants were of different majors. To get deeper insights about the impact of CL on learning and to explore possible similarities and/ or differences between the participants' responses in the questionnaire, the researcher conducted structured interviews with the participants who were willing to take part in the interviews. Each interview lasted about 15 minutes during which the participants were cod switching between English and Urdu. Later, the researcher validated the transcriptions with the participants via e-mail.

Data Analysis and Results

Quantitative Analysis

Objective 1: Investigate the attitude of teachers towards using collaborative activities in the classroom.

Table 1*Descriptive Statistics of Teachers' Attitude towards Collaborative Activities*

	Mean	Standard Deviation	95% CI
Attitude of teachers toward using collaborative activities	3.8	0.6	3.68 - 3.92

Table 1 shows the mean attitude of teachers towards using collaborative activities is 3.8, with a standard deviation of 0.6. The 95% confidence interval for the mean attitude ranges from 3.68 to 3.92. This suggests that, on average, teachers have a moderately positive attitude toward incorporating collaborative activities into their classrooms.

Objective 2: Explore the effect of collaborative learning strategies on student learning.

Table 2*Comparison of Pre-test and Post-test Scores of Students*

	Pre-test Mean	Post-test Mean	Mean Difference	t-statistic	p-value
Scores	65	80	15	10.64	< 0.001

Table 2 shows that the pre-test mean score for students is 65, while the post-test mean score is 80. The mean difference between the pre-test and post-test scores is 15. A t-test was conducted, resulting in a t-statistic of 10.64, indicating a significant difference between pre-test and post-test scores. The p-value obtained is less than 0.001, indicating that the difference is statistically significant. This suggests that collaborative learning strategies have a positive effect on student learning outcomes, as evidenced by the significant improvement from pre-test to post-test.

Objective 3: Assess the challenges that teachers face during collaborative learning in the classroom.

Table 3*Challenges Reported by Teachers during Collaborative Learning*

Challenge	Percentage (%)
Time Management	30
Group Dynamics	25
Unequal Participation	20
Assessment Difficulties	15
Lack of Resources	10

Table 3 shows that teachers reported various challenges during collaborative learning activities. The most commonly reported challenge is time management, with 30% of teachers citing it as an issue. Following time management, the challenges of group dynamics, unequal participation, assessment difficulties, and lack of resources are reported by 25%, 20%, 15%, and 10% of

teachers, respectively. This indicates that while collaborative learning has benefits, it also presents significant challenges for teachers to manage effectively.

Interview Analysis

Attitude of Teachers Towards Collaborating activities

Since children learn best in groups, several respondents advocated for the implementation of collaborative learning activities in the classroom. This data suggests that a sizable percentage of teachers offer a range of tasks requiring various forms of cooperative engagement. The information gathered from the interviews supports this idea. A subset of educators who participated in the interviews said that the type of assignment they are given determines whether or not they are willing to work together. Based on the information they shared, several participants said their experience was both tough and beneficial.

"Choosing the appropriate team members and ensuring cohesion and unity throughout the project, working with a weaker member and motivating, if necessary, compelling him to cooperate with me in order to attain optimal work outcomes, or collaborating with team members they are unfamiliar with rather than their peers"

According to some interviewees, their students first built barriers between themselves and their classmates from different academic programmes because they didn't know them well. These barriers had been removed by the conclusion of the semester, and every student was conversing with one another and getting to know one another. Numerous instructors have reported that they hardly ever incorporate group projects into their classes.

An English teacher gave an explanation of why she preferred group projects:

I believe my preference for collaborative work is because I teach younger pupils. They take a sincere interest in finishing whatever task you give them, and they pursue it with zeal. Students in primary school do not possess such earnestness and ambition."

Collaborative Activities' Effect on Students' Learning

Based on the data, most educators stated that they use group projects to get students excited about learning, engage them, boost their self-esteem, and promote involvement and contribution all throughout the classroom. One of the teachers claims, "Students actively participate in lessons. They are insecure while working alone, but confident when working in groups, willing to voice their opinions and confirm the accuracy of their presumptions. They are more at ease expressing their opinions. Collaborative work is more fun for them. They never tire out.

A few participants proposed that the learning process can be made more effective by engaging in peer talks to share ideas, experiences, and points of view. In traditional classroom settings, collaborative learning has a positive effect on learning outcomes, the development of social skills, self-esteem, problem-solving, and other types of higher-order thinking.

Challenges of Collaborative Learning Activities

A significant number of the educators surveyed reported that they often encounter difficulties when planning cooperative projects, including monitoring students' task compliance, allocating time for group work, supplying necessary resources, delegating individual responsibilities, and encouraging teamwork attitudes and behaviours.

Qualitative evidence collected from problem-solving exercises by participants indicated that during collaborative interactions, group members' coordination is not very good. Members of the group interrupted, disregarded, and unjustifiably rejected the viewpoints of their peers.

When integrating CL into the classroom, teachers frequently struggle to evaluate students' accomplishments and growth, according to a number of respondents. Instructors indicated uncertainty and ambiguity on what and how to assess. Educators have voiced concern about the evaluation standards and techniques' lack of precision and clarity. Moreover, instructors clarified that students might become dissatisfied with the evaluation's openness and objectivity if there were no assessment tools available to evaluate each member's collaborative efforts inside the group.

Only a small percentage of the teachers gave an explanation for the students' preference for Urdu over English in group projects. Unfavourable classroom conditions that hindered group projects, excessive noise levels during group work, and the instructor's challenges maintaining classroom order were among the other problems mentioned. During the interviews, a number of teachers claimed that adding group activities led to louder classrooms and more challenging classroom management. A participant said:

"Of course, working in pairs is more convenient." Younger pupils are pickier about who they choose as a companion. I would rather work with him than with her; I don't want to be in this group. Duo work is quieter than group work since each student is confined to their own desk.

Discussions

The results demonstrate that although English language teachers enjoy collaborative activities, they can occasionally find it difficult to implement them in the classroom. This result is in line with what Macquarrie, Howe, and Boyle (2012) found. According to Kocaman's (2005) research, teachers use pair work more often even if they believe group work is a beneficial teaching strategy. It is evident that group activities are difficult for English language teachers to carry out effectively. These challenges may stem from a lack of knowledge and abilities needed to carry out productive group projects in the classroom (Doymuş and Koç, 2012; Kocaman, 2005). Similarly, teachers in lower classes showed a more positive attitude towards CL than teachers in higher grades, according to Race and Powell's (2000) findings. It's still unclear if younger students can contribute to group or pair projects more successfully. Gagne and Parks (2013)

found that elementary school students may help their classmates in a variety of ways during CL activities in ESL lessons. Nonetheless, a noteworthy discovery from this research is that most students exhibit positive sentiments regarding group projects. Similar results have been found in earlier research (Çakmak, 2014; Çokparlamış, 2010; Kartal, 2014). In a study on student preferences, Mishra and Oliver (1998) found that while most students prefer group work, some prefer working independently on assignments that focus on grammar because they feel like they have more opportunities to practise their grammar. This conclusion is corroborated by Storch's (2005) research, which shows that for grammar-focused activities, pair labour does not perform better than individual effort.

Based on the information gathered from educators, the primary reason they select group projects is to inspire their pupils. Çakmak (2014), Kartal (2014), and Yasul and Samancı (2015) have all highlighted the significance of motivation in their respective studies. Increased student engagement, participation, and communication throughout the course are additional advantages of group work. One benefit of group work, according to the participants, is that it gives students practice speaking the target language, increasing speaking time. Research by Dilek (2012) and Kartal (2014) also makes this claim. The amount of language creation per student is thought to be the single most important benefit of cooperative learning above traditional classroom education, according to Kagan (1995).

The study found that students' propensity to communicate in L1 (Urdu) rather than the target language (English) during group work was the most often mentioned reason given by English-language teachers for difficulty leading group activities. Similarly, Kocaman (2005) found that speaking native language was the most frequent issue during group work activities. This could be related to the teacher's unclear and imprecise instructions. In a similar vein, Storch and Aldosari (2010) point out that teachers should be more concerned with their students' use of L1 than the target language when leading group activities. Inadequate classroom settings for group work, excessive noise, and difficulties managing the classroom were among the other explanations, ranked from most common to least common. These results are supported by Galton, Simon, and Croll's (1980) findings, which demonstrate that teachers found group work challenging to implement because it required time and required L1 usage from the students. Similar to this, participants in the studies by Çokparlamış (2010), Yasul and Samancı (2015), Kocaman (2005), Kale (2007), and Çakmak (2014) regarded classroom management issues including noise and misbehaviour from students as possible risks associated with group work activities. Gillies and Boyle (2010) found that group work adoption was negatively impacted by time management. A lot of noise might be a sign that students are interacting with each other in structured groups during collaborative learning. These interactions can include asking questions, giving comments, reaching consensus, and more. On the other side, excessive noise may be a sign of students' distraction and preoccupation with irrelevant social conversation. In such a scenario, the group is probably disorganised. Students in unstructured groups are more likely to be off goal than those in organised groups, according to Gillies (2004). This might be the result of their not receiving enough instruction from the teacher on the CL process, which would suggest that the teacher lacks the necessary knowledge to apply CL in the classroom.

Conclusion

Most participants are happy with the collaborative learning opportunities. Many seem to be hesitant about CL based on the pupils. It seems that CL positively affects students' learning. Based on the data, most educators stated that they use group projects to get students excited about learning, engage them, boost their self-esteem, and promote involvement and contribution all throughout the classroom. Their experiences working together seem to have a positive effect on their learning process, writing and spoken work, and grades. A significant number of the educators surveyed reported that they often encounter difficulties when planning cooperative projects, including monitoring students' task compliance, allocating time for group work, supplying necessary resources, delegating individual responsibilities, and encouraging teamwork attitudes and behaviours. The researcher cannot, as a social constructivist, assert that the results are generalizable; but, the researcher does assert that the results of this research study are authentic and trustworthy (credible, transferable, dependable, and confirmable). The researcher verified the validity of the results by comparing the questionnaire and the interviews.

Implications

The researcher suggests taking the following actions to increase the efficacy of CL activities in light of the findings.

Help children build relationships and social skills from the beginning of the school year.

2. Verify that, while collaborating, students are aware of the researcher's expectations.
3. Show students how to work together and give constructive criticism to one another's work.
4. Rather than enforcing preset group configurations, let students select their own members.
5. To lessen the burden of bearing a friend's share, encourage teams to include non-friends.
6. Assign responsibilities to group members and note their names on work plans to promote accountability.
7. Encourage students to communicate through a variety of channels outside of in-person interactions.

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