

Collaborative Learning as a Mechanism of Extracting Learning Abilities for English Course Design and Facilitation

Jean Hoo Fang Jing¹, Nurhamizah Ishak², Aqilah Arshad³,
Haniza Sarijari⁴, Shahira Adam⁵

Academy of Language Studies, UiTM Melaka^{1,2,3}, Academy of Language Studies, UiTM
Johor^{4,5}

Email: hoofangjing@uitm.edu.my¹, aqilaharshad@uitm.edu.my³, haniz652@uitm.edu.my⁴,
shahiraadam@uitm.edu.my⁵

Corresponding Author Email: hamizahishak@uitm.edu.my^{2*}

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Abstract

Extensive research presently provides plenty of evidence supporting the idea that collaborative learning has a good impact on learner achievement. When learners work together on tasks, they can use the different ideas and experiences of their classmates to solve problems and come to a better understanding of different meanings as a group. Sidgi (2022) claims that the success of every teaching and learning method depends on a network of factors that are interdependent. The most important of these are the quality, quantity, and efficiency of the fundamental factors. This study used a quantitative research methodology to look at how collaborative learning affected four main areas: students' ability to work together as a team, give presentations, manage their assignments, and speak and understand English. There were 47 respondents comprising 10 male students and 37 female students who participated in the research survey. The findings show that collaborating on tasks does improve both the way learners collaborate and their own skills, especially when it comes to skills like language skills, speaking skills, and managing assignments. Hence, collaborative learning methods should be used more often and in various settings to help learners learn a wide range of skills and work well with others. Aside from that, the results also indicate how important it is to know how to use technology for communication purposes when working with others. It is recommended that future researchers embark on investigating how to maximise effective technology usage in order to ensure the success of collaborative learning implementation.

Keywords: Team Collaboration, Presentation Skills, Assignment Management Skills, English Language Proficiency

Introduction

There is significant evidence supporting the notion that collaborative learning has a positive impact on educational development. Through engaging in collaborative activities, learners are

able to take advantage of the diverse perspectives and experiences of their peers to effectively solve problems and cultivate a collective comprehension of various meanings. Dialogue and social interaction empower learners to go beyond their individual capabilities. Collaborative learning holds great potential for benefiting learners at all levels of experience and in various situations. Collaborative inquiry has the potential to enhance teaching practise and enrich the learning experience for students as well as instructors. Different learner attributes, including prior knowledge, self-regulation abilities, and collaboration skills, can have an impact on the collaborative process and its outcomes. In addition to taking into account the individual attributes of learners, it is imperative to develop a better understanding of how collective traits influence the dynamics and outcomes of collaborative undertakings.

However, it is important to note that engaging in collaborative learning tasks involves appropriate support and instruction, as highlighted by (Kirschner et al., 2006). There are several technological factors that must be taken into consideration in order to attain favourable collaboration outcomes. In a similar direction, previous studies e.g., Janssen and Bodemer (2013) have demonstrated that communication skills can influence both the collaborative process and its outcomes, such as group performance and individual achievement. The study conducted by Janssen et al (2012) provided evidence that the utilisation of social group awareness skills such as communication skills, which visually represented the level of engagement exhibited by each member of a group during online discussions, had a good impact on the collaborative process. Specifically, the implementation of this skill resulted in an improved equality of participation among group members. Moreover, the study conducted by Lin et al (2015) revealed that their communication skills had a significant impact not only on the collaborative process but also on students' performance in post-test assessments.

The present cohort of students enrolled in institutions of higher education is commonly referred to as the Net Generation. This term is attributed to their status as digital natives who possess familiarity and comfort with technology, as noted by (Oblinger and Oblinger, 2005; Tapscott, 1998). The emergence of technology has brought about a significant transformation in all aspects of human life, including communication and learning methods for students (Hoo et al., 2022). The cognitive learning method exhibited by the Net Generation is characterised by nonlinear behaviour, imagination, multitasking, limited organisational skills, non-logical thinking, and a preference for loud sounds and visual stimulation. In this context, learners tend to exhibit a greater level of comfort when utilising a keyboard for input and express higher levels of satisfaction when engaging in reading activities facilitated by a computer screen. They have been adjusted especially after Covid-19 which enforces Online Distance Learning to them in many practises of engaging in immediate text-based communication through the use of technology devices. Within the realm of digital technology, the present cohort exhibits proficiency in the tasks of editing, finding, and acquiring knowledge from the vast expanse of information available on the internet. Learners from the younger generation in today's society tend to process and understand information through the utilisation of visual narratives accompanied by textual elements or symbolic representations. They engage in interpersonal communication within the realm of digital technology. Hence, this research has the potential to offer valuable insights into the influence of group characteristics, as well as its implications for collaborative outcomes in terms of technology and communication skills. In addition, this study also aims to provide useful insights into the impact of collaborative outcomes among learners on their acquisition of the English language.

Literature Review**Collaborative teaching and learning**

Due to the nature of the online environment, collaborative teaching and learning can now take place across several campuses. Razali et al. 2014 has described it as the establishment of online teams for the purpose of electronically completing an assigned job as part of the study requirements. Sidgi (2022) stated that individuals perform more effectively when they are collaborating with one another to complete a certain activity in order to achieve a common instructive purpose. Collaborative teaching and learning improve learners' comprehension by providing them with the opportunity to consider a variety of points of view (Sengpoh, 2019). When learners are assigned to cooperate in understanding a new topic, figuring out to solve a problem related to previous schemata and presenting their inputs in front of their classmates, instead of a typical situation whereby a single instructor repeatedly present lengthy slides during class time, it not only enhances students communication and critical thinking skills, but also trains them to become independent and self-regulated learners (Ronfeldt et al., 2015). Thus, this ideal teaching and learning method do not only benefit one stakeholder, namely the students, in terms of their achievements, but also the instructors. According to Sengpoh (2019), the concept of a collaborative teaching approach necessitates teams of lecturers working together to achieve mutually agreed upon aims and supports in order to cultivate interactive outcomes. This is because it is universally accepted that the contribution of two people is superior to that of a single individual.

Sidgi (2022) previously mentioned that the success of each and every teaching and learning approach is dependent on a network of interrelated factors, the most important of which are the quality, quantity, and effectiveness of the foundational loads. Further, Ronfeldt et al (2015) noted that the success of the collaborative method cannot be ensured due to the lack of close engagement on behalf of the instructors, given that it is they who are the developers of the work. One of these tasks can be accomplished by using an online environment, and instructors can choose to conduct their lessons in either a synchronous or an asynchronous manner; usage of either approach will result in improved student behaviour (Razali et al., 2014).

However, according to Sidgi (2022), the development of collaborative learning spaces as one of the components that contribute to the efficacy of this pedagogy will be required of universities in order for collaboration among instructors to become a reality. Universities will be required to provide this assistance in order to make teamwork among instructors a reality. In addition, a positive attitude from all of the educational stakeholders will ensure that the process goes smoothly, and a significant transition from the traditional solo teaching to the team teaching can almost certainly be seen as they are working together by sharing of ideas, goals, opinions, and tactics (Sengpoh, 2019). She also remarked that it would be a significant mistake if we were to ignore the benefits that come from using collaborative teaching and learning methods. She thought this would be a terrible mistake.

Collaborative Learning Fosters Communication

It is achievable for every student to become proficient or fluent in a language if the lessons are being conducted in the most fun manner as well as provided with the appropriate kind of resources and pedagogy. The process of learning a language is not focused on tedious exercises and explicit grammar rules. Interaction in the target language is necessary for natural communication in which both speakers are able to express and understand the messages as stated by (Krashen, 1982). Hence, the ability to share information, ideas, and

feedback, as well as the ability to co-operate with others in order to achieve a common objective, are the defining characteristics of communication and collaboration.

A communication theory of language by Richards and Rodgers (2014) namely Collaboration Between Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) places a strong emphasis on communication competence, which takes into account both the successful completion of the material's intended task and the successful delivery of its meaning. A collaborative approach to learning a language can lead to better results in speaking English than an individual's ability to study the language independently. During the process of learning, learners are expected to be actively involved. They allow their creativity to guide them through when they share their thoughts and ideas. They overcame the challenge by sharing what they learned with other learners.

The ability to communicate effectively was intended to be achieved through the study of target languages. With this strategy, it is essential for learners to engage in conversation with their peers and with people from other groups as well. As a result of this understanding, it was determined that without grammar, very little can be communicated, whereas without vocabulary, nothing can be said. When learners were going to produce something, it was reasonable to presume that vocabulary was the first component that needed to be mastered. This is because vocabulary was thought to be of high importance. The next step was to become proficient in grammar.

Collaborative teaching and learning improve English language proficiency

Collaborative teaching and learning have been made more visible in the recent years since it was introduced in the late 1980s Brufee (2000) as it contributes to more interesting and meaningful learning sessions. Collaborative teaching and learning include the incorporation of computer devices Roberts (2005), group discussion and the inclusion of negotiation (Stahl et al., 2006). This method allows creativity to take place while creating more meaningful interactions among students Ngeow (2004) which directly contribute to students' English learning skills.

Collaborative method has been proven to be successful especially in enhancing English learning skills as it provides the 'community' setting in the classrooms that helps to cater the social and academic supports that the students require in a meaningful language learning. This is supported by Layman (2006) and further strengthened by Wilmer (2009) where students are found to associate with better results due to the supportive environment such as active interactions that are produced in the collaborative teaching and learning setting. Other studies also found the positive impact of collaborative teaching and learning in enhancing students' ability to converse and communicate with others in English (Aileen et al., 2015). The presence of collaboration with others encourages the students to go out from their comfort zone even if it means to speak the second language brokenly as constant communication is essential for successful collaboration.

Despite the successful cases of collaborative teaching and learning leading to English learning skills' enhancement, students who are introverts and more passive tend to be disadvantaged from this method as according to Hedge (2000) assertiveness is one of the requirements in this learning setting. Nevertheless, other studies conducted by Wilmer (2009); Fasawang (2011); La Hanisi et al (2018) found that the supportive environment has produced a strong bond among the students which lead to positive learning outcomes in acquiring the necessary learning skills in English language.

Methodology

Using a quantitative research design, this study examined the impact of collaborative learning on four major themes that have helped shape our understanding of learner engagement in collaborative learning in an online assessment for language learning environment. The study implemented a deductive approach and survey questionnaires to conduct the investigation. This research exemplifies an epistemological worldview (Creswell, 2018) since it ensures an objectivist perspective in the process of comprehending what is being studied. Four instructors from two different campuses were responsible for grading the assessments that were given to the pupils. This is done to ensure that the grades of the pupils are allocated in an equitable manner. In addition to that, the thoughts and suggestions of the students were extremely important in order to guarantee the success of a collaboration that was completed and is now ongoing.

The participants in this study were diploma students who had previously participated in collaborative learning at a higher education institution in Malaysia. During their third semester, these students who aged 18 years old were chosen to take part in this study. 47 respondents comprising 10 male students and 37 female students answered a set of survey questionnaire, which is the main instrument for this study. The items in the survey questionnaire were adopted from literature review before they were later merged and modified appropriately in order to achieve the research objectives. The questionnaire items focused on collaborative learning and the engagement of students' team collaboration, presentation skills, assignment management skills, and English Language proficiency. All of these skills can be attained through the collaborative presentation that the respondents participated earlier.

The survey questionnaire was divided into two sections, which were as follows: five items in Section A that pertain to the demographic information of the participants, and eighteen items in Section B that pertain to the effectiveness of the four categories of students on collaborative learning. A Likert Scale with five points was utilised in the questionnaire. The labels on the scale were as follows: Strongly Agree = 5, Agree = 4, Neutral = 3, Disagree = 2, and Strongly Disagree = 1. In response to each item, participants provided responses based on their previous experiences with collaborative learning. The categories of attitude, knowledge, sensory, and emotion dimensions were subjected to quantitative statistical analysis, which are mean and standard deviation. As for the level of collaboration it was determined according to the following calculation: mean range of 1.00 -1.80 (very low), 1.81-2.60 (low), 2.61-3.40 (moderate), 3.41-4.20 (high), 4.21-5.00 (very high).

Findings & Discussion

Both the findings and the discussion of this paper are based on the following two research questions: 1) What is the level of effective collaboration that exists within a group? and 2) What are the individual learning outcomes that each participant experiences as a result of engaging in a collaborative presentation? The findings for research question 1 were presented in Table 2, whereas the findings for research question 2 were presented in Table 3, Table 4, and Table 5, respectively.

Table 2

Level of efficient collaboration within a team in a collaborative presentation task

	N	Mean	SD	Level of collaboration
We (my group members and I) established common goals during our collaborative presentation task	47	3.80	.770	High
We (my group members and I) communicated well as a team during our collaborative presentation task	47	4.15	.833	High
We (my group members and I) choose our group leader without difficulty during our collaborative presentation task	47	4.21	.832	Very High
Group discussions that were conducted with my group members to complete the collaborative presentation task contributes to my learning about proofreading and editing.]	47	4.13	.899	High
We managed to complete the collaborative presentation task (video and report) before the deadline.]	47	4.23	.632	Very High
We (my group members and I) divide equal and fair assignment parts to be completed to each member.]	47	4.02	.820	High
	47	4.09	.650	High

Table 2 shows six categories in which the learners have rated the efficiency of collaborating in a team to complete the presentation task given.

In the common goal establishment category, participants assessed this aspect with a mean of 3.80 and a standard deviation of .770, indicating a high level of collaboration in setting common goals which means that they worked together a lot to set common goals. In the communication category, the average rating for team communication was 4.15 with a standard deviation of .833. This indicates a high level of effective communication among group members during the presentation task and that team members communicated very well during the presentation. In addition, the third category, "selection of group leader," displayed a mean rating of 4.21 and a standard deviation of .832, indicating a very high level of collaboration for this category. This suggests that the process of choosing a group leader was typically uncomplicated and simple. The fourth category of learning from group talks reveals that participants assessed their learning from group talks on proofreading and editing at 4.13, with a standard deviation of .899. This shows a significant impact of these conversations on their learning. The fifth category, "meeting deadline," had a mean rating of 4.23 and a standard deviation of .632, indicating a very high level of successful adherence to deadlines by the team. The sixth category, "fair division of tasks," had a mean rating of 4.02 and a standard deviation of .820, indicating a high perception of equal and fair assignment division among team members. This is consistent with Sidgi's (2022) point of view, as he cited a paragraph in which the author said that in accordance with the idea, individuals perform more effectively when they are collaborating with one another to complete a certain activity in order to achieve a common instructive purpose.

Table 3

Individual learning outcomes among the participants in a collaborative presentation

	N	Mean	SD
Presentation skills	47	3.98	.797
Assignment management skills	47	4.05	.733
English language proficiency	47	4.13	.771

Data describing the individual learning outcomes of participants in collaborative presentations were collected and recorded in Table 3. Firstly, for Presentation Skills, the mean rating for the improvement in presentation skills among the participants was 3.98, with a standard deviation of 0.797. This indicates a generally positive perception of enhancement in presentation abilities as a result of the collaborative presentation task. Next, the results have clearly indicated that for Assignment Management Skills, participants rated the improvement in assignment management skills at 4.05, with a standard deviation of 0.733. This suggests a positive perception of enhancement in managing tasks and assignments within the collaborative presentation context. Besides that, for English Language Proficiency, the mean rating for the improvement in English language proficiency was 4.13, with a standard deviation of 0.771. This indicates a perceived improvement in English language skills among the participants resulting from the collaborative presentation task. Participants in a collaborative presentation task indicated that they had made the most progress in terms of their English Language proficiency. This was the most significant improvement across the three categories of individual learning outcomes. This approach facilitates the expression of original ideas, hence fostering more significant engagements among students Ngeow (2004), which directly enhance students' proficiency in English language acquisition.

Table 4

Presentation skills

Presentation skills	N	Mean	SD
Through collaborative presentation task, I have improved my presentation posture.	47	4.05	.858
Through collaborative presentation task, I have improved my presentation gestures.	47	4.02	.846
Through collaborative presentation task, I have improved my presentation delivery (speech fluency).	47	3.91	.880
Through collaborative presentation task, I have improved my presentation confidence.	47	3.94	.869
TOTAL	47	3.98	.797

Nevertheless, the data obtained on individuals' self-perceived enhancements in different areas of presentation abilities as a result of collaborative presentation tasks were represented in Table 4. Participants rated their progress in presentation posture with a mean score of 4.05, in addition to a standard deviation of 0.858. This suggests that collaborative tasks contribute to a favourable sense of improved posture during presentations. The results also showed that there was an improvement in presentation gestures, with a mean value of 4.02 and a standard deviation of 0.846. This indicates a positive review for enhanced use of gestures during presentations with collaboration. In addition, the participants viewed their enhancement in speech fluency during the delivery of their presentations with an average rating of 3.91,

accompanied by a standard deviation of 0.880. This suggests a perceived, but substantially decreased improvement in the fluency of speech in comparison to other factors. The mean score for improvement in presentation confidence was 3.94, with a standard deviation of 0.869. This indicates an encouraging impression of enhanced self-assurance in public speaking as a result of working together on assignments, although less significant than the impact of body language and movements. Overall, participants reported significant enhancements in their posture and gestures, as well as increased confidence and speaking fluency, after participating in collaborative presentation activities.

The presentation skills category showed the most significant increase in terms of presentation posture, with a mean score of 4.05 and a standard deviation of 0.858. The collaborative tasks may have highlighted the importance of non-verbal communication, such as body language and posture, in giving effective presentations. Participants could have actively engaged in efforts to enhance their posture as a component of their general development of communication skills. In addition, collaborative presentations sometimes need practise sessions and rehearsals. By practising frequently, participants were able to enhance their posture by incorporating suggestions from both their peers and instructors. Consequently, this resulted in improved posture during their actual presentations.

Table 5

Assignment management skill

Assignment management skills	N	Mean	SD
Through collaborative presentation task, I have improved my assignment planning skill.	47	3.91	.774
Through collaborative presentation task, I have improved my assignment referencing skill] -preparing content for the assignment.	47	4.05	.806
Through collaborative presentation task, I have improved my assignment editing skill.	47	4.15	.859
Through collaborative presentation task, I have improved my task distribution/juggling skill.	47	4.11	.758
TOTAL	47	4.05	.733

The results collected from Table 5 demonstrated improvements in assignment management skills as the result of engaging in collaborative presentation assignments. The average score for increase in assignment planning skill as a result of collaborative presenting assignments was 3.91, with a standard deviation of 0.774. The mean and standard deviation for improvement in assignment referencing competence (preparing content for the assignment) are 4.05 and 0.806, respectively. The findings indicate that collaborative presenting assignments lead to a mean increases of 4.15 in assignment editing skill, with a standard deviation of 0.859. The final skills depicted in the table demonstrate an enhancement in task distribution/juggling ability, with a mean rating of 4.11 and a standard deviation of 0.758.

According to the study results, participants observed significant improvement in several assignment management skills as a result of engaging in collaborative presentation tasks. The average scores for each skill are often high, suggesting a positive impact on skill improvement. The standard deviations indicate that there was a slight variance in the responds: but generally, the perceived increases in all obtained skills are significant. The findings suggest that collaborative presentation tasks are effective at improving assignment-related skills,

including planning, reference, editing, and work distribution/juggling. The increased average scores indicate that participants mostly perceived these tasks as having a beneficial impact on their development in these areas.

As for assignment management skills category, assignment editing skill scored the highest improvement with the mean = 4.15 and SD = .859. This could be due to the reasons of having peer review and feedback sessions which provide individuals with valuable constructive criticism, recommendations, and corrections. These opportunities enable individuals to effectively refine and edit their work. Participants may have experienced a sense of accountability for the quality of the final presentation, encouraging them to show more attention to detail and thoroughness in their editing efforts.

Table 6

English language proficiency

English language proficiency	N	Mean	SD
Through collaborative presentation task, I have improved my spoken English skills.	47	4.06	.791
Through collaborative presentation task, I have improved my English writing skills.	47	4.06	.869
Through collaborative presentation task, I have improved my English listening skills.	47	4.17	.816
Through collaborative presentation task, I have improved my understanding/comprehension of instruction given by the lecturer.	47	4.23	.813
TOTAL	47	4.13	.771

Based on the provided data in Table 6 on perceived improvements in English language proficiency resulting from collaborative presentation tasks, participants reported a mean score of 4.06, with a standard deviation of 0.791, indicating a positive perception of improved spoken English skills due to collaborative presentation tasks. Similarly, participants reported a mean score of 4.06, with a standard deviation of 0.869, suggesting a positive perception of improved English writing skills resulting from engaging in collaborative presentation tasks. Next, participants rated their improvement in English listening skills at a mean of 4.17, with a standard deviation of 0.816, indicating a notably positive perception of enhanced listening abilities due to these tasks. The mean rating for improvement in understanding or comprehension of instructions given by the lecturer was 4.23, with a standard deviation of 0.813, indicating a strong perception of improvement in this area due to collaborative presentation tasks. Generally, participants reported significant improvements in spoken English skills, writing skills, listening skills, and understanding/comprehension of instructions as a result of engaging in collaborative presentation tasks. The data suggests a positive impact on various aspects of English language proficiency through these collaborative tasks.

Conclusion

The information presented in table 2 indicates that there was a high level of effective collaboration among the members of the team while they were working on the collaborative presentation tasks. The evaluations indicate that there are good attitudes regarding the establishment of goals, communication, the selection of leadership, the learning from

discussions, the realisation of deadlines, and a fair division of tasks among members of the team. As a result, the first research question in this study was answered.

Then, in general, according to the values that are shown in table 3, the participants reported favourable individual learning outcomes as a result of their participation in the collaborative presentation. These outcomes included improved presentation skills, the ability to manage assignments, and English language competency. The category of presenting skills shown the most significant improvement in terms of presentation posture, which suggests that the collaborative tasks may have brought to light the significance of non-verbal communication, such as body language and posture, in the process of delivering good presentations. As a result of having peer review and feedback sessions, which give individuals with valuable constructive criticism, recommendations, and corrections, the assignment editing skill received the highest improvement. This is seen in Table 5, which displays the results for the category of assignment management skills. In the final analysis, the findings presented in table 6 demonstrate that the evidence reveals that these collaborative tasks have a good impact on a variety of variables which pertain to English language competency. Therefore, these findings have provided answers to the second research question in this study.

The extensive statistics presented in these tables together confirm the effectiveness of collaborative projects in improving both team dynamics and individual abilities, particularly in areas such as presentation, assignment management, and language proficiency. These findings support the ongoing use and integration of collaborative methods in learning settings to promote comprehensive skill development and successful teamwork.

Future researchers might consider replicating this study and simultaneously add new elements in their research to expand the research angle, such as influence of digital communication skills on collaborative learning and impact of collaborative learning on students' learning motivation.

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