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Research Article Title:

Exploring Collaborative teaching strategy as method to improve English Language Proficiency in an English Module

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Abstract

The study aims to determine the role of collaborative learning in improving students' English language competency in an English module. This quantitative study's population was first year students at a private Higher Education Institution (HEI) enrolled in English as module in their Diploma in Journalism qualification. Data was gathered through the use of a questionnaire. Respondents indicated that collaborative learning improved their English language proficiency and learning of language due to its social setting communicative nature. It was established that the interactive interaction provided a support system through collaborative group dynamics. This study is exploratory and therefore limited in scope and depth. No generalisations from the results could be made.

1. Introduction and context of study

The exploratory study sought to learn how collaborative teaching as a strategy can be used to improve the English language proficiency, in an English module, of a small group of first year students who are studying towards the Diploma in Journalism at HEI. The majority of students studying towards this qualification are not first language English speakers (student registration contracts). English proficiency of students in higher institutions of learning in South Africa is very important as the language of teaching and learning is English and language proficiency thus plays an important role in the academic success of students (Burnette, 1999).

The academic performance of Journalism students has been a cause for concern, with lack of English language competence suggested as the weakest link hence collaborative teaching and learning is explored as a possibility in closing this language gap (Kagan, 1995). Collaborative learning and teaching, through its student centred approach, leads to communicative competency (Celce-Murcia, Dornyei and Thurrel, 1995) and has been described as the best possible practice to improve students' language skills (Savignon, 1983). The same view is further cemented by Nelson, Gallagher, and Coleman (1993) who state that collaborative teaching and learning improves the language proficiency because of its active interaction.

1.1 Purpose

The aim of this study is to explore the possibility of improving the English Language proficiency of Journalism students in their English module through collaborative teaching and learning. The collaborative teaching strategy will be applied during the module contact sessions and the feedback will be quantifiably assessed to determine any successes or lack of improvement of the language proficiency through the application of this teaching strategy. The purpose is to build on the need to apply teaching strategies that assist mainly students whose home language is not English to become proficient in the use of this language. Therefore, the aim of this study is explore whether the implementation of a collaborative teaching strategy will improve the English language proficiency of students.

1.2 Background to the problem

From existing literature, 98% of students at the HEI are not English first language speakers (Registration Contracts, 2015). None of the students enrolled for the English module in 2015 is first language English speaker (Student Registration Contracts, 2015). Current studies and literature such as the one done by Grumbly (2000) and supported by other researchers such as Aina, Ogunde and Olanipekun (2013) and Kong, Powers, Starr and Williams (2012) indicate that proficiency in the language of teaching and learning impacts on *inter alia* students' academic grades. The students mainly struggle in their learning as engagement is limited due lack of proficiency in English, which is the medium of instruction in class (Stephen, Welman and Jordan, 2004; Blacquiere, 1989; Kong, Powers, Starr and Williams, 2012). This is particularly so for Journalism students as the nature of their discipline is very much English proficiency dependent. The discipline is communication driven and failure to communicate (and comprehend) has detrimental consequences for the students and their futures in the industry.

Since 2012 the academic grades of Journalism students enrolled for the English module has been a cause of concern with average mark being 55% in 2012 and that dropped drastically in 2013 with the average mark obtained being 44% and dropped further in 2014 to 41 % (SAM Reporting Console (Academic), 2015).

2. Problem Statement

The problem that needs to be explored is how English language proficiency of students can effectively be improved` through the application of collaborative learning as a teaching strategy in a classroom situation. The focus is on the first year Journalism students enrolled for English as a module. The reason why the first years were chosen for the study is because Improvement of their language proficiency can have a positive effect on the completion of the entire qualification. The wealth of literature and research (Maher, 2011; Stephen, Welman and Jordan, 2004; and Kong, Powers, Starr and Williams, 2012) in this area of study points to a complicated but extensive problem in the South African education system. Failure to fully comprehend the language used in teaching and learning might lead to low grades and minimal academic successes (Chen, 2008). It is against this backdrop that the challenge is to apply a collaborative teaching strategy that deliberately and interactively seeks to improve English proficiency of students.

2.1 Justification

There is broad research conducted on the impact of lack of English proficiency on students at tertiary level. There is also a wealth of research conducted on teaching strategies that can be used to improve the language proficiency of students, including the use of collaborative teaching (Chen, 2008; Crumbley, n.d and Bin 2009). The respondents and the environment are unique to these HEI students and this study is tailor made to meet the existing gap identified in their language proficiency.

2.2 Research questions

The approach to collaborative teaching strategy that is used to improve the English language proficiency of journalism students will be addressed through the following research questions:

- In what way can a collaborative teaching strategy be applied to improve the English proficiency of students?

- Which collaborative teaching tools best supports the improvement of English language proficiency?

2.3 Research Objectives

Concerning the study, the following research objectives serve to ground the study and give it the relevant focus as well as act as a compass on the direction to be. The objectives are as follows:

To determine how the collaborative teaching tools can be applied to improve the English proficiency of tertiary students.

To determine the improvement that collaborative teaching has on English proficiency of students studying Journalism in 2015.

3 Literature Review

Collaborative teaching can offer a solution to the lack of language proficiency (Chen, 2008). Collaborative teaching strategy works well on many dimensions and is a dream strategy for an educator (Stenlev, n.d). Even though this teaching strategy was not initially designed with language proficiency in mind, Stenlev (n.d) argues that one of the positive spin-offs from this is that it is an excellent way of teaching language and improving the communication skills of students. In essence, it increases the student's subject knowledge and language proficiency.

Ovando and Collier (1998) add weight to the argument that in improving the communicative competence of students, collaborative teaching strategy is also central to language acquisition and competence. It should also be highlighted that this competence is not achieved at the expense of knowledge content. The students improve on both content and language. A notable figure in collaborative teaching literature, Kagan, (1995) also noted the positive effects of collaborative strategy as it supports and creates a motivating context that promotes language development (Kagan and Kagan, 1998).

In a study by Bin (2009), through use of collaborative teaching and learning, 87% of the students improved their English language proficiency with a minor 13% remaining stagnant. Crumbley's (n.d) research had a much higher success rate with over 90% of the participants having improved their proficiency in English. Armed with such positives from related research, collaborative teaching becomes a potential strategy worth exploring with the chosen sample.

Armstrong, Taylor, Gustafsson, Spaul and Berg (2011) contribute to the view that English impacts on student successes. One of the theories that have been used to describe why students from a different linguistic background find it difficult to succeed academically is the socialisation mismatch theory made popular by Faltis (1997). This theory predicts students stand a better chance of performing academically better if home language and literacy socialisation patterns are the same as those used in teaching and learning (Faltis, 1997). At linguistic level, the patterns are never similar when the medium of instruction is not the mother-tongue of the student.

As the issue pertaining to language continues, collaborative teaching comes in as a strategy that offers a twofold solution, namely to improve the language proficiency of students in higher education and at the same time transfer content knowledge that needs to be acquired.

3.1 Key definitions

This section gives the definition of terms as they are used in this context, inclusive of operational and constitutive definitions.

3.1.1 Collaborative learning:

This is interaction in small groups based on structured principles. Olsen and Kagan (1992) defined collaborative learning as group structured learning activity based on socially structured interaction where a student is held accountable for his/her learning and also the learning of others in their group.

3.1.2 Collaborative Teaching Strategies:

Highly interactive team based instructional activities that engender sustained and enhanced learning (Boundless Education, 2015).

3.1.3 Language Proficiency:

Being competent in a language orally (speaking and listening) and written (reading and writing) (Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991).

4 Research Methodology and Design

This section highlights the type of research and the related procedures used to gather and interpret evidence.

4.1 Research Paradigm and Methodology

The post-positivism paradigm is best applicable paradigm in this research. Post-positivism came as a modification of positivism that believed in the certainty of a single truth objectively observed without any influence from the researcher (Crotty, 1998). Post-positivism, as much as it embraces the notion of objectivity and realism, goes a step further by stating that the researcher cannot objectively observe reality as outsiders (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007). This speaks directly to the study at hand as the researcher was involved in applying collaborative learning during English Module, and therefore cannot be a disinterested outsider.

4.2 Research Design and data collection Methods

This is a quantitative study as it seeks to be objective in that the gathered information was mathematically analysed. Linked to being an exploratory study, the sample will be small and no generalisations to be made. Quantitative research is mostly pedestrianly defined and limited to numbers and statistics. Quantitative research seeks to explain a given phenomenon but then takes a different route in that it deals with numerical data that is collected and then gets analysed mathematically (Aliaga and Gunderson, 2000).

Quantitative research goes hand in hand with the post-positivism worldview in an attempt to objectively capture reality and minimise bias. Creswell (2003) cements the relationship between quantitative research and the researchers' post-positivist world view for it is the only approach that allows the post-positivist to develop knowledge. As the chosen

approach, quantitative research allows for the use of non-experimental designs and in this particular case, a survey will be used as a strategy of inquiry. This allows the researcher to be objective and also to complete the study in the set timeframe as quantitative methods of research allow for quick and precise collection of data (Velez, 2008).

4.2.1 Survey design

Cross-sectional study, as the chosen survey design determined how the study was carried out and it spoke directly to the research questions and problem. According to Gronlund (1981), a cross sectional survey design is objective, observational and limits researcher bias as it does not allow the researcher to manipulate the participants' environment. In addition to that, cross-section surveys determine a particular attribute in the chosen population at a particular point in time (Gronlund, 1981) hence they provide a snapshot of the population at a certain point in time (Weerasekera, 2009).

The sample population was exposed to the collaborative teaching style in class and the improvement in English proficiency of students was determined at a particular point in time. This was done through the use of a questionnaire. Due to time and resource limitations, cross-sectional study becomes relevant for it is not only objective but quick and cheap as data will only be collected once.

While it is a disadvantage that this study gives a snapshot or little depth, and ignores the fact that environment changes over time, it does make up for this by providing a base for future research and gives an indication of the magnitude of the problem (Weerasekera, 2009). This cross sectional design will normally allow for inferences to be made about the sample population at one point in time, though this will not be possible in this study due to the small sample size. Another characteristic of cross-sectional design that was employed in this study that is helpful is that it is both descriptive and analytical (Hall, 2004).

4.2.2 Data Collection method and Analysis

Cross-sectional design allows for a variety of data collection methods to be used including questionnaires. Questionnaires were used in this study to gather quantitative data. The questionnaire, as survey instrument, was self-administered where students completed it in their own time as this allowed for in-depth responses. It should be noted that this is a

method that allows for quick and effective way of collecting data within a limited space of time (An introduction to Research, 2012). Two question types were used, open and closed ended questions. The students, in closed ended questions, were given alternatives to choose from and then they were expected to give in-depth information through their responses to open ended questions.

Descriptive statistics and graphics are used to analyse the collected data. Responses from the questionnaire were transferred to a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. Closed ended questions were calculated related to selected responses. The coding for the open ended questions were based on the emerging themes from the given responses. The comments were arranged under the identified themes. Depending on the comments, subcategories were created. The headings or categories were reviewed and interpreted as to what they actually mean or communicate. Patterns and trends were identified and interpreted. The data analysis concluded with descriptive text that summarised the findings.

4.3 Research population and sampling

For this study, only Diploma in Journalism first year students who are enrolled for English as a module at Higher Education Institutional (HEI) were selected. There are 99 students enrolled for the module. This number is made up of first year students and repeat students who did not pass the module during the previous year. Students were divided into two groups (classes) to minimise the sample group. Only group one made up of 45 students formed part of the sample.

For the purpose of this study, convenience sampling is used. The non-probability convenience sampling, which is also known as opportunity sampling (Field, 2005:7) allows the researcher to draw a sample from 'part of the population that is close at hand'. The researcher lectures the English module to Diploma in Journalism first year students in Group one.

The chosen sampling method gives the researcher the ability to use collaborative teaching strategies in pursuit of maximum positive results. Tools used included the Jigsaw, Circle the Sage, Three-step interview, Numbered Heads Together and Round Robin Brainstorming. The chosen method of sampling, unlike the clustering method, allows for maximum interaction amongst students of differing abilities. The interaction of students

with different abilities resonates with Fredericks' (2005) definition of collaborative learning where small teams made up of students with different levels of ability improve their understanding through the use of a variety of learning activities. It is such an approach that enhances interactions amongst students and by extension communication and language skills get enhance.

Besides accessibility and proximity, the chosen sampling method establishes basic data and trends and is useful for detecting relationships (Field, 2005). In this case it will be the possibility of a relationship between collaborative teaching and language proficiency improvement.

4.4 Limitations Applicable to the Research

The results of this study will be limited because it is an exploratory research. The sample size is restricted to first year Diploma in journalism students group one and therefore may not be transferable beyond this group one. Though the methodology used is quantitative, the size of the chosen sample is small and therefore no generalisations may be made. Other limitation is the time factor as the study is completed within a set time frame therefore it will not be as extensive as it would have been had the time frame allowed.

4.5 Ethical considerations

The well-being of the participants in this study is of utmost importance. The three ethical principles (Jonsen, 1996) of informed consent, risk-benefit and fair selection were taken into consideration. Kant's (1998) philosophy of informed consent is ensured. The participants were given full information that could enable them to decide to participate voluntarily. Consent forms with information sheets attached were given to the participants. The information sheets contain detailed information related to the research to enable participants to make informed decisions.

Aita and Richer (2005) emphasise, in terms of ethical conduct that the participants need to know the benefits or risks associated with the research in question. In this research study, participants may directly benefit from the study as the purpose was to improve the English

proficiency. To avoid any discrimination, the anonymity of respondents were ensured and their input treated as confidential. Respondents could at any time withdraw from the study.

5. Data Analysis, Findings and Discussion

Information gathered was coded to identify significant experiences and ideas to evaluate their impact on students' responses to collaborative learning in language learning. All information gathered from the students was reviewed per question and in some cases of commonality gathered responses were categorised to allow for more in-depth analysis. The questionnaire sought to determine the students' involvement in collaborative learning and the nature of their language competence experiences.

5.1 Participation

The starting point established that all the respondents who participated in the study did form part of the collaborative learning during the English module. All 45 students indicated that they participated, thus the response rate for the affirmative was 100%. This means that all the respondents were part of the participants in collaborative learning and hence their responses become valid.

5.2 Collaborative learning and language learning

Figure 5.1 below establishes the respondents' own perception regarding whether their participation in collaborative learning improved their learning of English, thus the respondents were made to reflect on their collaborative learning.

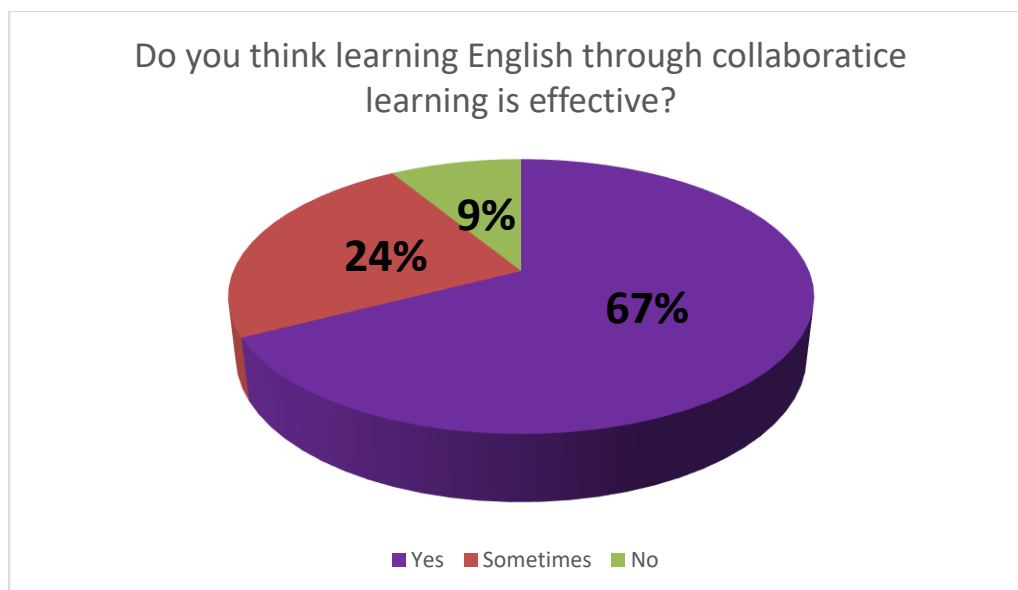


Figure 5.1: Learning English through Collaborative Efforts

Based on the above finding, it is clear that collaborative learning is mainly perceived as a valid strategy that can be used to improve the students' learning of English language and thereby contributing to their language competence. This is given credence by Zhang (2010) who found that one of the spin offs from collaborative learning was that, consciously or unconsciously, non- native English language students learn language better in collaborative learning.

In the follow up question, students justified their responses. As indicated in Figure 5.1.1, the 67% of the respondents who perceived collaborative learning as aiding them in learning, 62% of them pointed out that this was due to interaction and engagement with their peers during collaborative learning which enabled them to master new English vocabulary. This validates Jia (2003) statement who holds that effective language learning depends on the structured interaction that collaborative learning provides through enhanced communication in the target language. To this end, Zhang (2010) clearly pointed out that students divided into six groups in a class can get six times as many opportunities to talk as in a full class organisation. Eighteen percent (18%) of the 67% stated that they learnt and understood English better as it was at their own appropriate level (lateral) as opposed to lecturing which is a top down form of transmitting information. Crandall (1999) and Kagan (1995) are in agreement with the above observation in that when communicating, a group students try make themselves more understood hence they adjust

their language to suit members of the group. Seven percent (7%) attributed their positive affirmation due to the nature of diversity in collaborative learning hence no alternative rather than communicating only in English. Collaborative participants corrected each other's spelling and grammatical errors and this according to the 13% of the 67%, was the reason they perceived collaborative learning as helpful in their learning of English. Ellis (1999) noted that learners tend to use accurate language, use longer sentences so as to be better understood and are also conscious of their grammar.

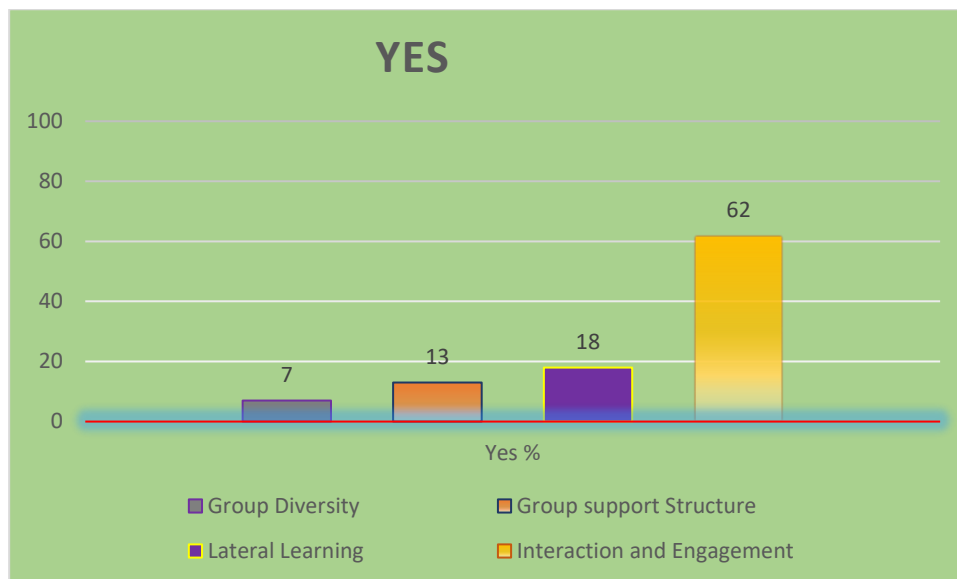


Figure 5.1.1 Justification for affirmative responses

Of the 24% of the respondents who perceived that collaborative learning sometimes aided in learning English, 73% of them stated that depending on the composition of the collaborative groups sometimes they learnt English better and sometimes they did not because the groups were constantly changed and this affected the dynamics of the collaborative groups. Twenty percent (20%) stated that there was minimal learning of English as most of the participants had low English proficiency and hence it was difficult to learn from them. Four percent (4%) pointed that there was a tendency in collaborative groups to revert to using the participants' home language, which is not English, and this affected the learning of English. Three percent (3%) agreed that though collaborative learning did assist in learning English, they stated that they learnt much faster and better from traditional lecturing as compared to collaborative learning as reflected in Figure 5.1.2 below:

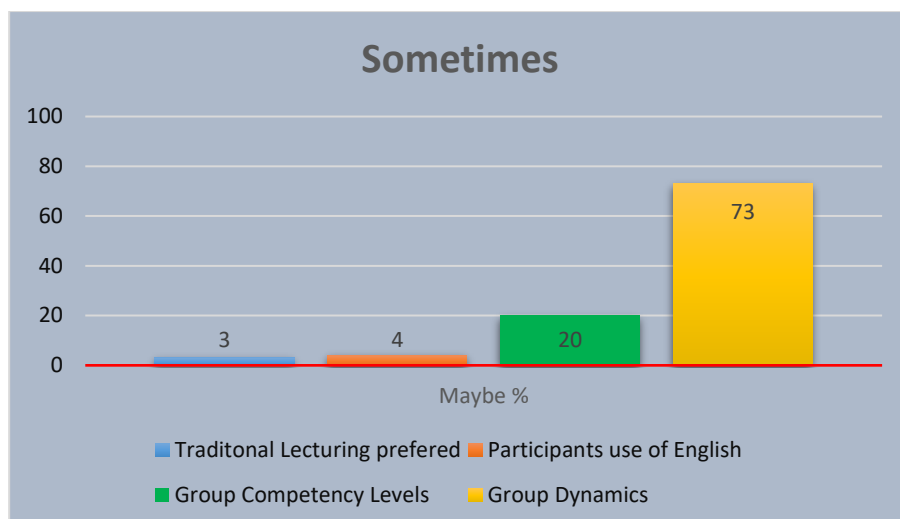


Figure 5.1.2 Justification for 'sometimes' responses

The respondents (9%) who clearly indicated that collaborative learning did not aid in their learning of English simply stated that they learnt better alone as it was uncomfortable to work with others and hence could not focus during collaborative learning. This validates Hedge's (2000) cautionary warning that if the collaborative groups are not well constituted, then there is a risk of having a context that is counterproductive to learning. This means that though there is an agreement that collaborative learning aids in learning English, the composition of the groups needs to be well thought of and well structured.

5.3 Effective Collaborative activity

Jigsaw, Numbered heads together, team pair solo and Round Robin Brainstorming were the activities that were used as part of collaborative teaching and learning and the respondents had to pinpoint which activity they found most effective and where they learnt most from as indicated in Figure 5.2 below.

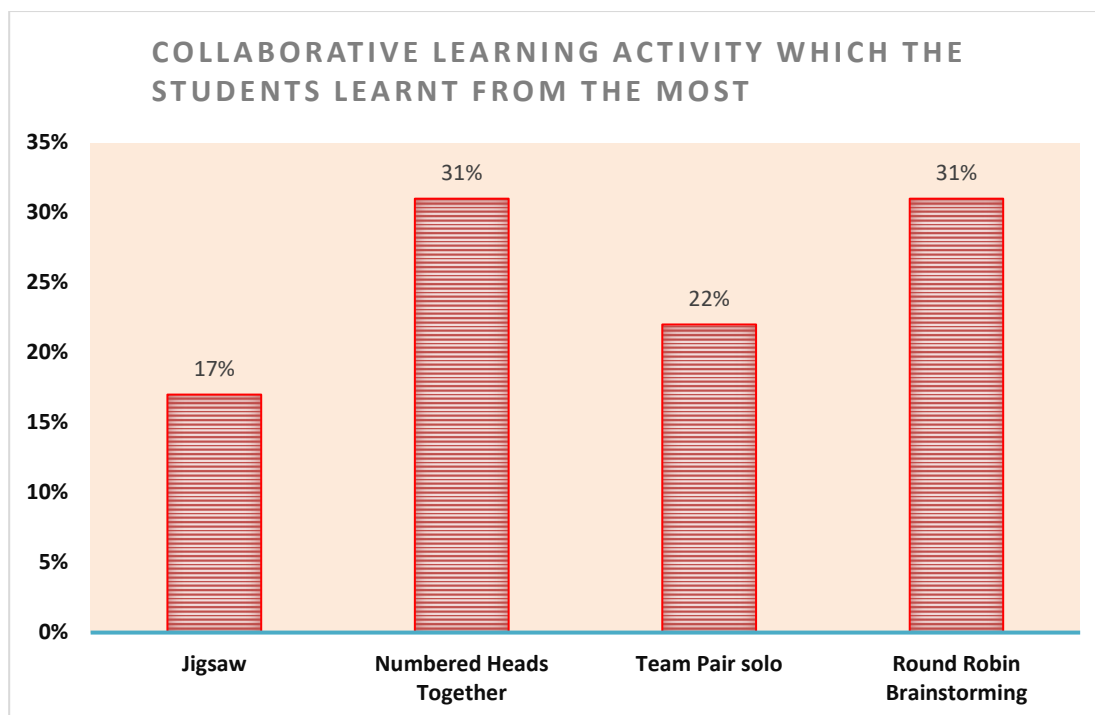


Figure 5.2 Effective collaborative activity

Numbered Heads Together is the most preferred but the margins are not far apart except for the Jigsaw. The respondents gave reasons for their choice, though without much depth, 84% based their decision on forced participation (indirectly) as in Numbered Heads together and 16% based their decision on increased interaction and engagement (these activities are explained annexure A). This means that varying activities is important to rejuvenate collaborative learning and also that maximum participation should be ensured just is Numbered Heads Together to ensure engagement. It is when participation is guaranteed that effective learning can take place and this leads to a high proportion of comprehensible input (Brown, 1994).

5.4 Collaborative Learning as a support structure

Lightbown and Spada (1999) pointed out that in collaborative learning, students find themselves involved in requesting, clarifying and negotiating meaning with each other and this forms part of support that collaborative learning offers in language learning and this is

in agreement with the findings in this study as indicated in Figure 5.3. One of the underpinning principles of a successful collaborative learning and language proficiency improvement is that ability of the members to assist each other and jointly progress towards the desired objective. The respondents were asked if they found support from other group members when faced with an English language problem. The responses indicate that the majority of the respondents have found support as indicated in Figure 5.3 below.

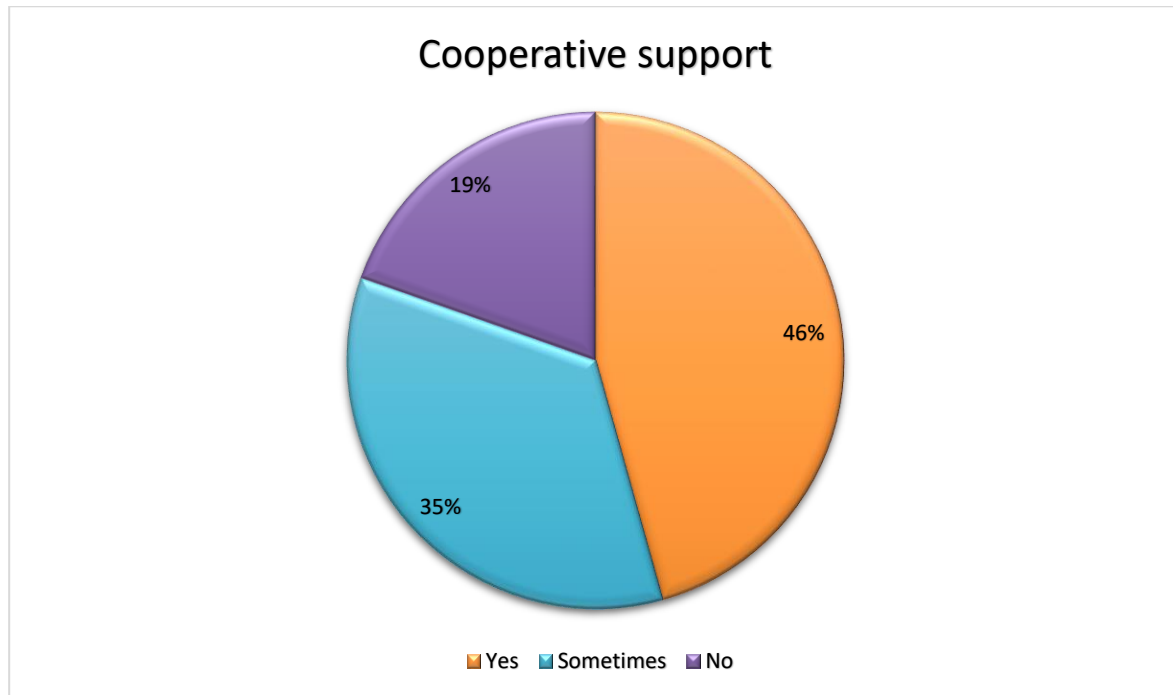


Figure 5.3 Cooperative Learning Support

The respondents had to qualify on whether they found their collaborative teammates helpful or not when approached for support when they had language problems. suggested Forty-four percent (44%) found the teammates helpful thus confirming Lightbown and Spada (1999) assertion that collaborative learning offers a support structure that aids in language acquisition, development and improvement. Thirty Seven percent (37%) found help sometimes and 19% indicating a negative which is also a reflection of the 19% who never approached collaborative group members for help with English problems.

5.5 Collaborative Learning and Language Proficiency

In an attempt to determine the relationship between collaborative learning and language proficiency, the respondents were requested to state and explain if collaborative learning did assist in improving their English language proficiency with more than 65% of the respondents clearly indicating that their proficiency was improved through collaborative learning as indicated in Figure 5.4 below.

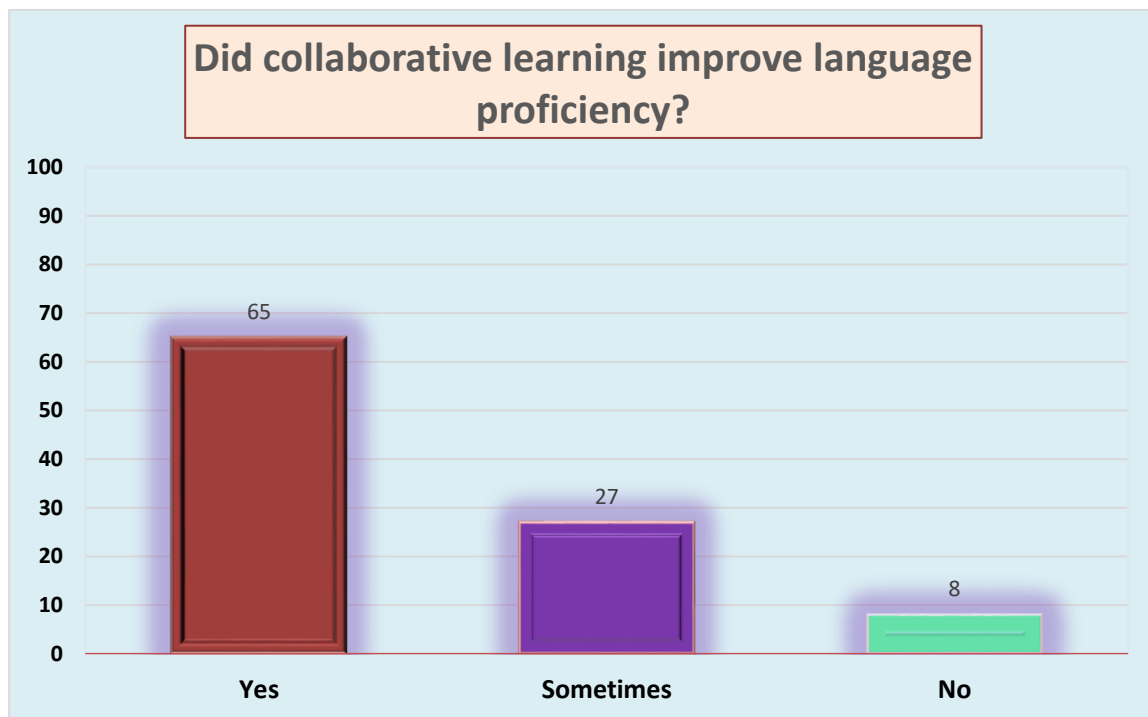


Figure 5.4 Collaborative Learning and language proficiency improvement.

The 65% of the respondents who attested that collaborative learning improved their English language proficiency, 68% of them pointed out that through communicating with others, with 22% attributing it to having peers correct their English errors at a level they can relate to and the 10% attributing their positive responses to collaborative group members having to break down English language challenges into more manageable tasks that are solvable as seen in Figure 5.4.1 below.

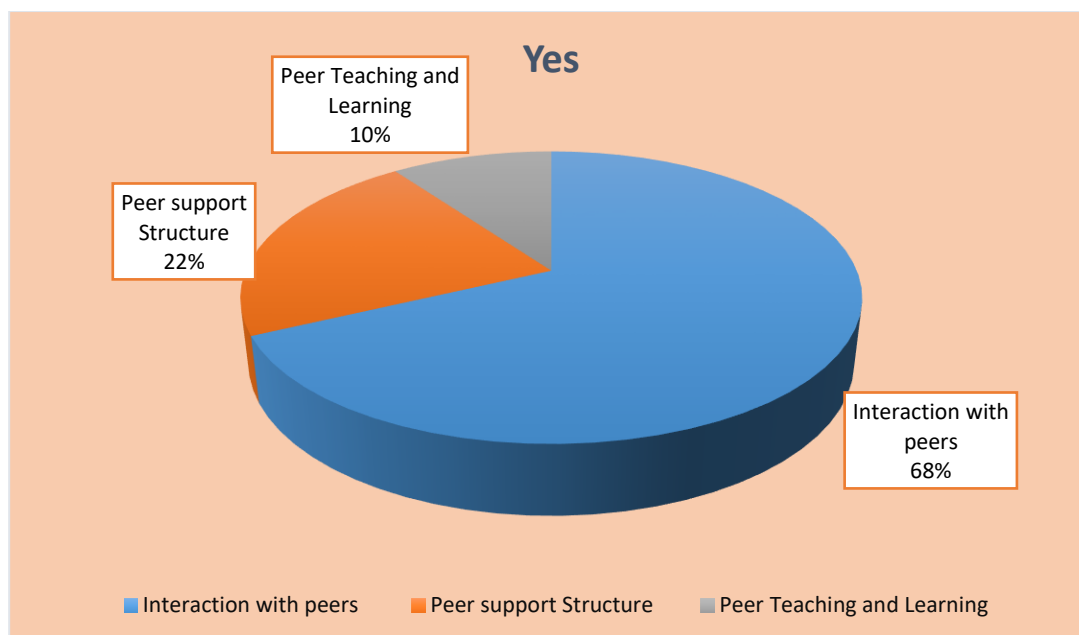


Figure 5.4.1 How Collaborative improved Language proficiency

The 27% who responded that collaborative learning sometimes improved their English language proficiency with 92% of them stating that it depended on the engagement with other group members and whether they were participating or not. The remainder eight percent (8%) said it depended on the competence of collaborative group members as some English language concepts were challenging to the extent that no interaction in the groups took place. The high affirmative response echoes Zhang's (2010) assertion that collaborative learning allows the learners more chances to produce language in a functional manner as it mimics real-life language usage as opposed to a traditional classroom. This is also in line with a study by Bin (2009), that found that through use of collaborative teaching and learning, 87% of the learners improved their English language proficiency with a minor 13% remaining stagnant, this, he interprets, was due to various reasons that included lack of participation, pressure and also failure to adapt to change, change to a new teaching and learning strategy.

5.6 Language Skills

Language is made up four main skills; listening, Speaking, reading and writing. The respondents were asked to select which skill, if any, they improved the most through collaborative learning and their responses are as reflected in Figure 5.5 below.



Figure 5.5 Collaborative Learning and Language Skill improvement

From the chosen skill, the respondents were asked to explain how the language skill was improved. Eighty-four percent (84%) of the respondents stated the language skills were acquired through the structured interaction with their peers. This is inclusive of turn-taking in communication, ability of other participants to correct the errors of others and the ability to teach and learn from one another further reinforcing findings by Zhanga (2010) and Lightbown and Spada (1999) amongst others that face-to-face promotive interactive interaction in collaborative learning spreads the same principles found in Communicative Language Teaching. The remainder 16% stated that there was no language skill improved. The findings mean that overall collaborative learning improves language skills which are part of language and communicative competence.

5.7 Collaborative learning experiences

To get the overall perception of the respondents' experiences of cooperative learning in their learning of English Language. Fifty-three percent (53%) of the respondents responded that through teamwork, support and teaching of each other and this contributed to their perceived improved English language proficiency in line with Ovando and Collier's (1998) argument that in improving the communicative competence of students, collaborative teaching strategy is also central to language acquisition and competence. Twenty four (24%) also had a positive experience though theirs was based on that the lateral engagement allowed them to be open to corrections and comfortable with making genuine English errors. Fourteen percent 14% of the students had mixed experiences that all pointed to group dynamics just as Hedge (2000) cautioned that if collaborative groups are not well constituted, then there is a risk of having a context that is counter-productive to learning. Depending on the composition of the collaborative group members, they had positive and negative experiences. The 14% indicated that were there was active participation, collaborative learning made learning English easy. Nine percent (9%) expressed their negative experiences while learning English through collaborative learning. This was due to 'arrogant' group members who failed foster a positive and learning culture within the group and also due to others preferring to work in isolation. This means that the students had positive experiences of learning language through collaborative learning but a trend that is also noticeable is that if group dynamics are not carefully thought out then learning will not take place as can be seen in Figure 5.6 below.

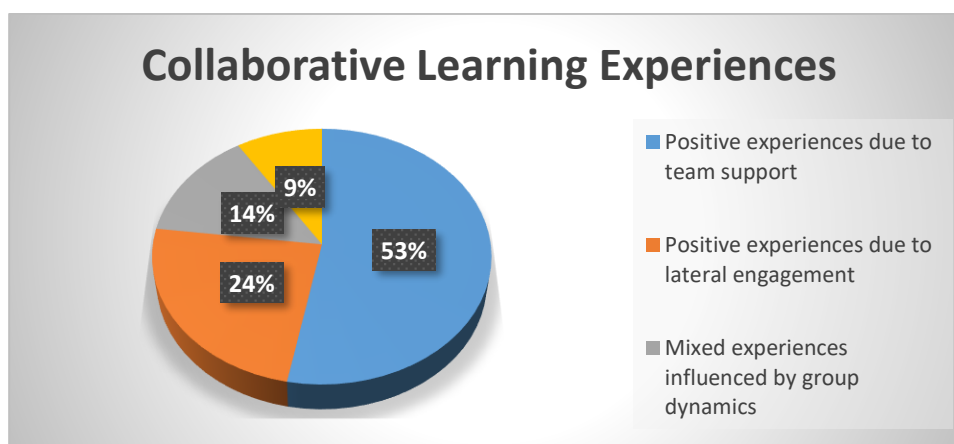


Figure 5.5 Collaborative Learning Experiences

6. Recommendations

From the findings and the analysis of data one recommends that further extensive investigation be done on how collaborative learning can be used to improve language proficiency of students as this study was only exploratory in nature. As has been evidenced group dynamics determine the success or failure of collaborative learning, this should prompt further investigation of how to positively engage with and manipulate group dynamics to achieve the desired success results. Group dynamics in collaborative learning came up as a challenge in this study and this leads one to further recommend the training of the facilitators/lecturers on how to conduct collaborative teaching and learning as a means of minimising mismatches within collaborative learning.

The research established that collaborative learning improved language learning and proficiency of the students in the learning of the English language. The trend established is that this due to positive communicative interaction and the support structure that has been provided by other collaborative group members which increased confidence and motivation. The collaborative learning environment mimicked the real life social setting where students benefited from using language in a functional manner. All the collaborative learning activities used proved effective and this was mainly due to the nature of the interaction derived from each activity. In this regard further investigation is recommended to establish if collaborative learning strategy can be implemented with other learners to see if any improvement can be achieved.

7. Conclusion

The study established that, from respondents' feedback, collaborative learning aided in improving the students English language proficiency regardless of the collaborative learning activity used. The positive feedback means that there is still scope to further investigate how collaborative learning can be further maximised to get the best results in language learning and proficiency for non-first language English speakers in general. The indication from the respondents is that the interaction and help from other group members

made learning English more comprehensive, easier and more engaging as opposed to traditional lecturing strategy. Getting the group dynamics right is the key to unlocking the success of collaborative learning and a trend from the respondents is that dysfunctional collaborative learning groups were due group dynamics gone wrong. This opens up another area of further investigation on collaborative learning group dynamics.

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Annexure A

Questionnaire for Students

Dear Journalism Student

Research is currently been done on the influence of collaborative learning in improving your English Language Skills in the English module. Collaborative learning is interaction in small groups based on structured principles. This is where students learn purposely in groups and actively work together. Collaborative groups is a purposefully organised grouping of students were the active working together occurs.

The purpose of this questionnaire is to explore if collaborative learning improved your English proficiency in your English module. To guard your privacy, your responses will be treated as confidential and therefore **PLEASE DO NOT WRITE YOUR NAME ON THE PAPER**. Participation in this study is voluntary and you can withdraw from the research at any point. There are no repercussions for not participating in this study and it will not affect your grades. To ensure transparency, the data from this study will be made available to those interested.

Instructions: This questionnaire comprises of closed-ended and open-ended questions. Open-ended questions are where you can respond openly without restrictive responses. Close-ended questions are where you have to choose your response from the suggested alternatives. After reading the closed-ended questions there are alternatives given. Put an **X** on the alternative that you agree with, with YES meaning you agree, NO meaning you disagree and SOMETIMES if you are not sure or sometimes disagree or sometimes agree. For open-ended questions, spaces are provided for detailed responses. Please be honest in your responses. Your cooperation in completing this questionnaire is appreciated.

Please complete all the questions.

Question 1: Did you participate in any of the collaborative groups in your English Module?

Yes	No	Sometimes

Question 2: Do you think learning English thorough collaborative learning is effective?

Yes	No	Sometimes

Question 3: Please explain your answer to question 2

Question 4: Indicate which activities of collaborative teaching you learnt from the most. Choose only ONE of the options below.

Collaborative Teaching type	Recap	Found Enjoyable and learned from (x)
Jigsaw	Each group member was assigned some unique material to learn and then to teach to his/her group members	
Think-Pair-Share	This was a three-step process where individuals thought silently about a question posed by the lecturer and later on paired up during the second step and exchanged thoughts. In the last step, the pairs shared their responses with other pairs, and the entire group.	
Numbered Heads Together	Groups of four were established. Each member was given numbers of 1, 2, 3, 4. Questions are asked of the group by calling of individual numbers by the lecturer.	
Circle the Sage	The chosen sages were made to spread out in the room. The rest of the students gathered around a sage, with no two members of the same team going to the same sage.	
Team Pair Solo	Students did problems first as a team, then with a partner, and finally on their own.	
Round Robin Brainstorming	Class was divided into groups of four with one person appointed as the recorder. A question was posed with many answers and you were given time to think about answers. After the given time group members shared responses with one another round robin style.	

Question 5. Briefly comment on why you were able to learn best from the chosen activity.

Question 6: Whenever you had an English problem, did you turn to your group members for help?

Yes	No	Sometimes

Question 7: If you did, comment on whether the group members were helpful or not?

Question 8: Did collaborative learning assist you in improving your English language proficiency?

Yes	No	Sometimes

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Question 9: Depending on your response to question 7 above, explain how collaborative learning assisted or did not assist you in improving your English language proficiency.

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10: Which language skill, if any, did you improve the most through collaborative learning? Select the skill most improved from the list below. Select only **ONE**.

Language Skill	Improved (X)
Listening	
Speaking	
Reading	
Writing	
No language skill improved	

Question 11. If you have chosen any language skill from the above, explain how the language skill was improved.

Question 12: Overall, what were your experiences of collaborative learning in your learning of English language?

Question 13: Any other comments or feedback on the use of collaborative learning in the classroom?

Thank you for your participation.