Using Cooperative Learning Strategies to Develop Rural Primary Students' English Oral Performance

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Abstract

This small-scale quasi-experimental research study aimed at investigating the effectiveness of cooperative learning (CL) strategies in the achievement of students' oral performance at the A1 Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) level. The study participants were twenty-four seventh graders from a small rural primary school located on the southern part of Cuenca city. The quantitative part was based on a descriptive statistic study. It was collected through the students' speaking pre and post-test. The results were processed and analyzed through SPSS version 25. To compare the mean scores of the students in the pre and post- test, a T test for one sample was used. In addition, the qualitative part based on phenomenological research was gathered through direct classroom observations and group discussion. Findings indicated that: firstly, the study participants reached their A1 oral performance level in the evaluation criteria of comprehension, interaction, fluency, pronunciation. Secondly, students had positive attitudes toward CL strategies. Thirdly, through CL strategies students became more motivated and less reluctant during oral participation. In light of the findings, CL should be adopted in primary English learning as it helps improve learners' EFL peaking skill.

Keywords: cooperative learning, English speaking skills, attitudes, perceptions

1. Introduction

Teaching EFL process has been broadly discussed for years by theorists and researchers. Every year, standardized tests and international organizations, such as Education First English Proficiency Index (EF EPI) and British Council have reported the English language proficiency of different countries. Regarding the Ecuadorian context, the EF EPI (2018) results assigned a low English performance level. Moreover, the study of Malik, Esaki-Smith, Lee and Ngan (2015) indicated an intermediate average score for reading and listening and a fair average score for speaking and writing. These results demonstrated that Ecuadorian English proficiency level, especially speaking skill is under the average score.

In this context Puma (2015), asserted that this situation is especially seen in rural schools where baccalaureate students' EFL level does not meet the objectives proposed by the Ecuadorian Ministry of Education (MINEDUC) (B1 level). Calderón (2015) indicated that this could be attributed to the lack of materials, economic resources, and the poor application of active teaching methodologies.

As a result of these circumstances, the MINEDUC has implemented some measures to improve the English language teaching-learning process of the country continuously (Ortega & Auccahuallpa, 2017). In 1992 they initiated with the compulsory English language teaching in secondary education (British Council, 2015). Likewise, in 2012 the English Language Teaching (Fortalecimiento de la Enseñanza del Inglés) project that was promoted by the MINEDUC came into force. In this project, the New National Curriculum Guidelines 2012 were established. After that, in 2016, the EFL Curriculum was elaborated by the MINEDUC, and it mainly focused on helping the third-year baccalaureate students to reach the B1 level by the end of high school education. At that time, the teaching of EFL at the primary school level became mandatory.

Although the above-mentioned actions were carried out, the English low proficiency level still remained. Therefore, Naranjo and Naranjo (2017) stated that effective pedagogical practices related to communicative approach such as cooperative learning (CL) may support the English language teaching process. In that way,

EFL learners may reach the required level set by the national standards within the new curriculum. In consensus with the previous studies, Villafuerte et al. (2018) emphasized that group learning activities directed by the CL approach can be viewed as strategies that may positively support the English Language acquisition in the Ecuadorian educational context.

1.1 The Relationship Between CL and the Development of the Speaking Skill

Researches in different countries have demonstrated that CL is effective to develop students' English skills, mainly speaking. Nasser (2014), conducted a study to highlight the effectiveness of CL strategies on the undergraduate learners. The study results showed a remarkable development in their speaking skills as well as improvement in their attitudes towards EFL learning. Moreover, Ahmed and Bedri (2017) investigated the role of CL in enhancing EFL second year university students' oral communication skills. The results demonstrated that the students' EFL speaking skills were developed. Also, they showed an increase attributed to their mutual help and support.

In accordance with the aforementioned studies, Devia and García (2017) indicated, being able to successfully communicate orally is a fundamental skill in language learning. Through this, students share their ideas, feelings, and thoughts (Kaniadewi, Sundayana, & Purnawrman, 2017). Therefore, whatever the target language is, learners need to develop speaking skills to express themselves in the foreign language. However, it can represent a huge challenge especially for beginners. Thereby, Devia and García (2017) suggested that cooperative learning is a supportive strategy to help students develop their speaking skills. It involves psychological processes where participants control their fear, stress, and anxiety they feel when practicing EFL speaking (Priyantin, 2016). Yet, in cooperation, students feel secure and sure to participate orally in class. Cooperation means working in a way that every person helps one another in order to achieve common goals (Johnson & Johnson, 2017). CL is not the group configuration, but the way students and teachers work together, taking into account the following five basic elements: positive interdependence, face to face interaction, individual accountability, social skills, and group processing (Johnson, Johnson, & Holubec, 2013). Therefore, the aforementioned authors have recommended CL strategies as important sources that can be adapted in EFL classrooms to develop students' speaking skills.

1.2 The Relationship Between CL Strategies and the Development of the Students' EFL Speaking Skills

Rot-Vrhovec (2015) recommends to apply CL strategies with pupils of all ages. Kandasamy & Habil (2018) stated that CL strategies positively affected students' attitudes and interests towards English Language learning. As a result, students improve their pronunciation, fluency, and accuracy, which are essential components in speaking skills. Also, CL strategies help school students to interact more with their peers due to the fact that all of them are accountable in a group work learning activity. It should be pointed out that this kind of interaction promotes active oral participation among language learners (Lucena & San Jose, 2016).

Therefore, considering the previous information, the present research study investigated the effectiveness of CL strategies in facilitating 24 seventh graders achieve A1 oral performance at a rural elementary school outside Cuenca city. The study explored the development of the English-speaking skill through the use of lessons based on cooperative learning strategies. This research used cooperative learning group as the independent variable and the development of the speaking skill as the dependent variable. The former variable was measured by comparing the results of the study participants' speaking skills obtained in the pre- test with the results in the post test. Moreover, this study investigated seventh grade students' attitudes and perceptions towards the implementation of selected CL strategies into English language instruction in relation with motivation to speak.

A more detailed description of the research problem, the methodology, the results, the discussion, and the conclusions are described in the below sections.

1.3 Importance of the Problem

It has been observed that there is a need to improve the current speaking skill level among seventh graders. The students have possessed a low development of this skill since the 2017-2018 school year, which was the first time they were familiar with English language learning. As Puma (2015) reported, public education, especially rural institutions, do not have enough English teachers and consequently these schools do not offer this subject. Additionally, Calderón (2015) commented that the lack of material and economic resources are also reasons for rural students' poor oral performance level.

The existing English language low proficiency level can be evidenced in the research carried out by Ortega and Auccauallpa (2017). The authors carried out a quantitative exploratory study where the results described low English language competencies. The participants were 142 students studying the last year of General Unified

Baccalaureate during the 2016 -2017 school year. They belonged to eight rural public institutions located in Azogues, a city from Cañar province. In general, the study showed that the participants' English language proficiency level was very limited, especially in the oral linguistic competence. Five of the eight educational institutions had an oral performance average percentage between 20.4% and 45.70% over 100%.

In 2016, the MINEDUC established the agreement Nro. MINEDUC-ME-2016-00020-A, in which the teaching of EFL had to be compulsory at primary schools. Therefore, at the end of the school year, seventh graders are expected to achieve an A1 level (beginner level). It means that by the end of this school year, they will be able to produce slow, hesitant, and planned dialogues; bearing in mind that oral communication still depends on repetition, rephrasing, and repair (MINEDUC, 2014). With these notions in mind, it is crucial to create a CL environment for the study participants from this specific school context in order to help them to reach their A1 English-speaking level.

2. Methodology

The present quasi-experimental research study aimed to investigate whether CL strategies are effective to help seventh graders to reach their A1 English-speaking level. The study employed a mixed method approach: quantitative and qualitative. On one side, the quantitative phase intended to evaluate the effectiveness of a group of CL strategies in reaching seventh graders A1 English-speaking skill. It was based on a descriptive statistic study. By means of this type of study, the researcher could specify properties and important characteristics of an analyzed phenomenon by describing the positive or negative inclination of the numerical results of a group from a statistical point of view (Hernández, Fernández, & Baptista, 2014). On the other side, the qualitative phase was aimed to find out the students' attitudes and perceptions towards CL strategies in relation with their motivation to speak. It was based on a phenomenological research study. The main purpose of this type of design is to explore, to describe, and to understand the participants' experiences regarding a phenomenon throughout describing the common elements of such identified experiences (Hernández, Fernández, & Baptista, 2014).

2.1 Participants

The participants in this study were 24 seventh graders from a rural elementary school located in Cumbe, a small parish from Cuenca. They were 14 males and 10 females, ranging from 11 to 12 years old (M = 11.38, SD = 0.50). All of them were homogeneous with regard to ethnicity, native language, exposure to English, and educational and cultural background. All the participants were exposed to regular English instruction, three hours per week, according to the Ecuadorian EFL Curriculum for subnivel medio (MINEDUC, 2016).

2.2 Data Collection Instruments

The study mainly used three research instruments. The first one was an oral test, used as a pre and post-test to measure students' A1 English oral performance. It was adapted from Villalba (2014) and Euro Exam International A1 (2017). The test contained tasks, such as an interview, a presentation, and a picture description. A scoring rubric taken from Villalba (2014) was included to evaluate the speaking test. It provided a measure of quality of performance on the basis of the following criteria: comprehension, interaction, pronunciation, accuracy, and fluency on a five-rating scale ranging from 9 to 10 meaning "excellent", 7 - 8 "very good", 5 - 6 "good", 3 - 4 "fair", 1 - 2 "poor". In addition, to show validity and feasibility, the test was piloted to 12 students similar to the research study participants. This process allowed the researcher to carry out improvements in the rubric before it was used with the actual participants during the treatment phase of the study. It also helped to mark off the time and the best kind of grouping configuration needed to complete the test.

The second instrument was a template in which the information from direct classroom observations was registered. The observations were intended to find out the students' attitudes towards the implementation of the CL strategies in relation with their motivation to speak. In this instrument, note taking techniques were employed. The third instrument was a set of questions used for a focus group discussion, which was aimed at finding out the students' perceptions towards the implemented lessons based on the CL strategies and the impact of the lessons on their motivation. The questions were asked in Spanish being this, the students' mother tongue. Consequently, it was easier for them to express their views and opinions. Also, the set of questions were piloted with a group of students alike to the actual participants of the study. For instance, this process allowed the researcher to establish the wait time required for the questions during the actual focus group and to make adjustments to the structure of the posed questions and the extension of the instrument.

2.3 Data Collection Procedure

The quantitative data were collected through the students' scores obtained from a speaking test that was conducted twice in this study. Firstly, the pre-test was applied to know about the students' actual speaking

proficiency level. Then the same instrument was utilized as the post-test; this test was conducted to know whether the students' speaking skill reached the A1 level or not after the application of the CL strategies.

On the other hand, the qualitative data was gathered through the classroom observation notes. Finally, the focus group discussion was videotaped and then transcribed on a computer.

3. Results

3.1 Data Analysis

The data from the speaking test were analyzed by means of central tendency measures (mean) and dispersion (minimum, maximum and standard deviation). In addition, in order to establish the similarity between the scores with the minimum score (7) required to reach the A1 level, the statistical T-Student test for one sample was carried out. The decisions were made with a significance of 5% ($p<.05$). The statistical program SPSS 25 and Excel 2016 for the creation of tables and graphs were used as part of this study. Meanwhile, the data gathered through direct classroom observation notes and the focus group discussion were analyzed through these three steps for qualitative data analysis recommended by Gay et al. (2012): reading/memoing; describing the participants, describing the setting and the phenomenon studied, and classifying research data.

3.2 The Speaking Tests Results

3.2.1 Pre- test Results

Before the intervention, the students general score in each task ranged from 1 to 3.6. It indicated poor levels of oral expression. None of them achieved the A1 required learning level established by the MINEDUC, "fair" according to the evaluation rubric. The interview was the task within the test with the best performance (M = 1.68, SD = 0.67), followed by the presentation (M = 1.57, SD = 0.60), and finally the picture description (M = 1.52, SD = 0.60).

Considering the five evaluation criteria of each task, it was found out that the maximum score obtained by the students was 5 points. These corresponded to the evaluation criterion of *comprehension*, revealed as the best performance in all the tasks from the test. The criteria with the lowest scores were: *acurrancy* in the interview (M = 1.46, SD = 0.59) and picture description (M = 1.29, SD = 0.46); and *interaction* in the presentation (M = 1.33, SD = 0.48). The details can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Pre-test results

		Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation
Interview (M=1.68; DE=0.67)	Comprehension	1	4	2.25	0.99
	Interaction	1	3	1.50	0.66
	Accuracy	1	3	1.46	0.59
	Fluency	1	5	1.63	0.88
	Pronunciation	1	3	1.54	0.59
Presentation (M=1.57; DE=0.60)	Comprehension	1	3	2.00	0.83
	Interaction	1	2	1.33	0.48
	Accuracy	1	2	1.42	0.50
	Fluency	1	4	1.54	0.72
	Pronunciation	1	4	1.54	0.72
Picture description (M=1.52; SD=0.60)	Comprehension	1	3	1.88	0.80
	Accuracy	1	2	1.29	0.46
	Fluency	1	4	1.46	0.72
	Pronunciation	1	4	1.46	0.72

3.2.2 Post-test

After the intervention, it was evidenced maximum scores of 10 in comprehension and fluency in each of the

evaluation criteria. The *picture description* was the task with the best performance (M = 6.86, SD = 2.34), followed by the presentation (M = 6.73, Std Deviation = 2.25) and finally the interview (M = 6.16, Std Deviation = 2.52). Broadly, all the tasks of the test are very close to achieve the A1 required learning level as mandated by MINEDUC (2016).

Comprehension, was the evaluation criterion with the best performance in all the tasks of the test and the weakest criterion was *accuracy*, the details can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2. Post test results

		Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation
	Comprehension	1	10	7.29	3.21
	Interaction	1	9	6.71	2.77
Interview (M=6.16; SD=2.52)	Accuracy	1	8	4.21	1.98
	Fluency	1	10	6.71	3.16
	Pronunciation	1	9	5.88	2.44
	Comprehension	1	10	7.75	2.85
	Interaction	1	9	7.13	1.87
Presentation (M=6.73; SD=2.25)	Accuracy	1	8	5.04	2.18
	fluency	1	10	7.08	2.80
	Pronunciation	1	9	6.63	2.37
	Comprehension	1	10	8.21	2.81
Picture description (M=6.86; SD=2.34)	Accuracy	1	8	5.00	2.00
	Fluency	1	10	7.75	2.74
	Pronunciation	1	9	6.50	2.40

3.3.3 Comparison: Pre and Post Intervention

The average total score of the students before the intervention was 1.58 / 10 (Std Deviation = 0.60), while after the intervention, it was 6.59 / 10 (Std Deviation = 1.92) revealing an increase of 5.01 in general. Each evaluation criterion was calculated as an average of each of the tasks in the test. In Figure 1, it can be seen that prior to the intervention, the oral performance of the students was "poor" according to the evaluation rubric. They were ranged between 1.39 and 2.04. However, after the intervention (Figure 2), it can be seen significant increase in all the different criteria: 7.75 points in comprehension, revealing the best results; 6.92 points in interaction; 6.33 in accuracy, revealing the weakest increase; 7.18 in fluency; and 6.59 in pronunciation.

It can also be observed that, in the evaluation criteria with regard to comprehension and fluency, the final results confirmed that the required score was reached (score > 7); while, in interaction, accuracy, and pronunciation the students were close to achieve the required learning of the target language (scores between 4.01 and 6.99).
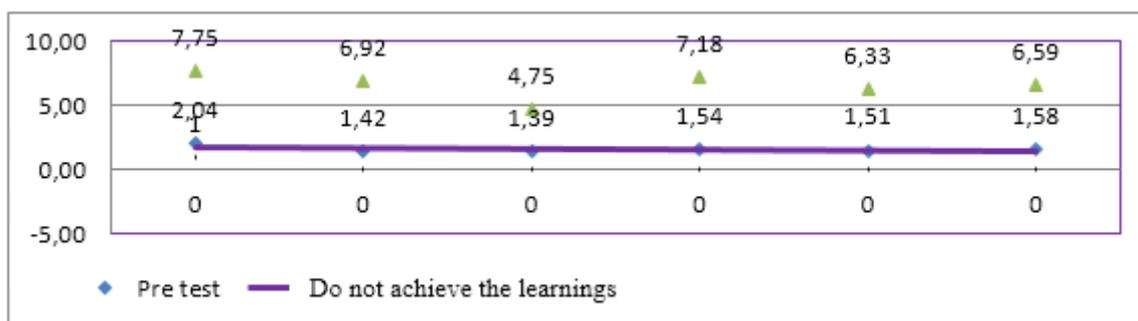

Figure 1. Pre intervention results

Figure 2. Post intervention Results

3.3 A1 Achievement Level

To determine if the students reached the A1 level oral performance, the results of each criterion and the final score were compared with the value seven through the T-Student test for a sample. According to the MINEDUC (2016), seven is the score that indicates students' achievement of their English learnings.

Table 4 shows that in the pretest, the students did not reach the A1 level since none of the evaluation criteria approached to seven ($p <. 05$). Nevertheless, after the intervention the students revealed scores close to 7 ($p > .05$), which implies that the A1 level was reached in the total score of the speaking test. Also, the scores reached the required level in all their evaluation criteria, except in accuracy ($p <. 05$).

Table 4. Students results A1 level (Test value =7)

Evaluation Criteria	Pre test			Post test		
	Mean	Std Deviation	p	Mean	Std Deviation	p
Comprehension	2.04	0.83	0.000**	7.75	2.29	0.122
Interaction	1.42	0.52	0.000**	6.92	2.12	0.849
Accuracy	1.39	0.47	0.000**	4.75	1.72	0.000**
Fluency	1.54	0.75	0.000**	7.18	2.31	0.705
Pronunciation	1.51	0.65	0.000**	6.33	1.80	0.082
Total	1.58	0.6	0.000**	6.58	1.91	0.300

*Note: * Significant Difference (p<.05).*

3.4 Direct Classroom Observations

The participants were observed during 32 sessions of 40 minutes and each time significant field notes were registered in the instrument. The direct classroom observation notes were registered on an observation template. When the data on the templates were examined, the following categories emerged over the course of data analysis: group formation (GF); cooperative work attitudes (CWA) consisting of positive interdependence (PI), face to face interaction (FFI), individual accountability (IA), and social skills (SS); as well as oral participation (OP).

3.4.1 Group Formation (GF)

During group work, it was observed that many students liked to work in groups; some in pairs, and a few individually. Students in the first sessions demonstrated negative attitudes when they were asked to group or pair with different students. However, after some sessions, many participants showed more acceptance to work with different group members. There were few students who preferred to work in pairs and very little individually, until the end of the sessions.

3.4.2 Cooperative Work Attitudes (CWA)

In addition, it was observed that at the beginning of the sessions, there were students who did not understand the importance of being engaged during group work. They let some students only to do the task. However, after some sessions the students were active participants in the teaching- learning process (PI). For instance, the

numbered- head CL strategy allowed students to be very engaged during the English language instruction. A number was called up randomly to share the answers and everybody needed to pay attention and be ready to provide them. Also, they were responsible in their assigned roles (IA) as well as during whole group work development. For example, when the students participated in the jigsaw strategy each one of them were assigned with a role such as the leader, the time keeper, the recorder, and the reporter. All of them were engaged in their roles and were responsible for each one of their tasks. Some students did not understand what the task was about or how to carry it out. Therefore, there were students who assisted and supported among one other (FFI). It was evident during the application of the Three Steps Interview CL strategy that the students helped among one another in their pronunciation, grammar mistakes, and vocabulary. Additionally, during group tasks, students exchanged opinions, ideas, and information within the group (SS). The think-pair-share CL strategy was the one where SS was promoted. The students expressed their ideas to their group mates and they listened carefully to one another. In general, it could be perceived that students through CL strategies showed positive attitudes toward English language learning. They showed four of the five CL basic elements: positive interdependence, individual accountability, face to face interaction, and social skills.

3.4.3 Oral Participation (OP).

While the study participants performed the cooperative tasks and oral activities, it was observed that they demonstrated an active oral participation during the planned learning activities. Most of the time, students used vocabulary words from the beginning of the sessions despite their lack of pronunciation. In addition, while working in groups, most students were less reluctant to use the language orally. There were students who helped their group members or even members of other groups by correcting the pronunciation or by assisting them to provide the answers. It could be seen that there were participants who were role models regarding pronunciation for their classmates. Finally, while working in groups students not only used the vocabulary words and sentences from the lessons, but also common classroom phrases like "help me, please", "work in groups", "thank you", "good morning", etc.

3.5 The Focus Group Discussion

The focus group discussion, which can be seen in Appendix 7, on the other side, was analyzed through: group formation (GF), cooperative work perceptions (CWP), and oral participation (OP). Three group of seven students were made up considering the following characteristics: the first group consisted of students who got high scores in the post test and were active participants during the implementation of the cooperative group activities. The second group was comprised of students who got low scores in the post test but were active participants during the cooperative group activities. Finally, the third group had students who got low scores in the post test and were not active participants during the cooperative group activities.

3.5.1 Group Formation (GF)

The first category emerged out of data analysis was group formation. The researcher, implemented some group configuration techniques where it was seen that students showed acceptance to join in groups, some in pairs, and a few individually. This can be supported by the following focus group discussion transcript extracts presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Group formation

Question (Coding) No.	Focus Group (Coding) No.	Participant (Coding) No.	Focus group discussion extracts
Q10	G1	S5	*en grupo porque cambiamos las opiniones.* (in groups because you exchange opinions.
		S6	*en partners o individual porque o sino unos hacen y otros no.* (in partners or individually because you do the tasks and other do not.)

3.5.2 Cooperative work perceptions (CWP)

During the lessons that comprised the treatment phase of the present study some CL strategies were implemented, such as Jigsaw and Three Step Interviews. In the former strategy each member in the group was assigned with

roles. The students demonstrated good acceptance before them. Additionally, when working in groups, participants commented to have good leadership skills because they could create an environment of trust and respect when interchanging opinions and ideas. Furthermore, students perceived that their participation and engagement in the activities improved. Finally, during group work, the study participants made meaningful contributions, which allowed the task to be better accomplished. It showed that students demonstrated PI during the lessons by helping to one another. All this can be supported by the following extracts of focus group discussion transcript in Table 6.

Table 6. Cooperative work perceptions

Cooperative Learning Elements	Question (Coding) No.	Focus Group (Coding) No.	Participant (Coding) No.	Focus group discussion extracts
FFI	Q17	G1	S6	*porque nos ayudamos, porque si fuera individual, tendríamos que hablar nosotros solos como monólogo.* (because we help each other, because if it were individually, we would talk to ourselves as monologue.)
SS	Q15	G1	S6	*opiniones, ideas, juegos, noticias, lo que sea para compartir entre compañeros.* (opinions, ideas, games, news, whatever we can share with our partners.)
IR	Q13	G2	S1	*sí, porque ellos dan opiniones y nosotros tenemos que escribir…así todos realizamos la tarea.* (yes, because they share opinions and we have to write ... so we all do the task.)
PI	Q16	G3	S1	*que tenemos que ser más responsables con el grupo.* (that we have to be more responsible with the group.)

3.5.3 Oral Participation (OP)

It was notorious during the implemented lessons that students were supported by their classmates and became more active speakers. They used short, modeled conversations, common classroom phrases, and easy vocabulary words. Likewise, students helped one another, especially in the way words and short phrases were pronounced. It can be evidenced from the transcript extracts below in Table 7.

Table 7. Oral participation

Question (Coding) No.	Focus Group (Coding) No.	Participant (Coding) No.	Focus group discussion extracts
Q17	G1	S1	*motivados, porque… investigamos, tenemos más ideas…ósea cuando decimos alguna palabra nos corrigen… para poder hacer mucho mejor.* (yes, because... we investigate, we have more ideas ...when we say a word, they correct us …)
Q19	G1	S6	*me siento seguro compartiendo las palabras. ¿Por ejemplo, unos dicen "Good morning" otros "How are you?" y hay decimos ¿Por qué dices how are you? ¿Qué significa?* (…I feel secure sharing the words. For example, someone says "Good morning" others "How

are you?" and then we say Why do you say how are you? What it means?)

The above-mentioned results show that CL strategies provided positive outcomes to seventh graders. They increased their motivation to learn English and mainly to develop their speaking skill. Also, students developed their social skills which allowed them to promote their positive attitudes while working in groups.

4. Discussion

The findings of this study revealed positive outcomes in regard to the development of the seventh graders' speaking performance after the implementation of some CL strategies as well as their motivation to use English language orally.

Firstly, CL strategies made an effective role with the seven graders A1 speaking skill level. They worked well during the teaching instructions. The pre and post- test indicated that the students' speaking skills were improved. They reached their A1 level in speaking sub-skills (comprehension, interaction, pronunciation and fluency). These findings are consistent with the study findings of Devia and García (2017) that showed speaking improvement. In this sense, their results evidenced how students were positively influenced by these strategies to improve their vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, and fluency. Similarly, it is in line with the findings of Nasser (2014) which showed a remarkable development in the students' speaking skills after the introduction of CL techniques. The findings of this study provide confirmatory evidence in support of the results generated in the study by Ahmed and Bredi (2017) as well as Lucena and San Jose (2016). These authors asserted that the implementation of CL in the language learning process can develop students' speaking skills.

Additionally, with regard to investigate the students' attitudes towards the CL strategies in relation with their motivation to speak, significant differences were found between the students' attitudes. The study participants had a more positive attitude towards their speaking skill. Firstly, the students were helpful among each other, and it demonstrated promoted interaction. This is in line with the findings of Johnson and Johnson (2017) who stated that through CL students provided mutual help and assistance over the course of second language instruction. Secondly, the participants' challenges to work in groups, encouraged their patience, creativity, organization, and task design. These results supported the findings of Devia and García (2017) where the results demonstrated that all the study groups improved together by exchanging ideas, supporting one another and working in an organized way. Thirdly, it can be proved that CL strategies promote positive attitudes in students when using the target language verbally. It can be evidenced in the studies carried out by Nasser (2014) and Ahmed and Bedri (2017) where the results showed an increase concerning students' positive attitudes in relation to their motivation to use the language during oral communication.

Finally, in order to find out the students' perceptions towards the implementation of CL strategies in relation with their motivation to speak, the findings showed that through CL strategies students increased their motivation. The study results indicated that students where active participants while learning the target language because of their mutual help. This is similar to the findings showed of Ahmed and Bredi (2017) and Priyantin (2016) where an increase in students' interest and enthusiasm towards learning English was yielded. Also, those learners who are reluctant and fearful speakers are able to overcome these feelings.

5. Conclusions

On the basis of the above evidence provided by this quasi experimental research study, it can be concluded the following: firstly, there is no doubt that CL strategies are beneficial to improve students' speaking skills. Through them, students could practice their oral performance. Giving as result, improvement in their EFL comprehension, interaction, fluency, and pronunciation. Because of that, teachers, especially those teaching English speaking skills at schools need to be aware of the benefits and importance of these strategies.

In addition, through CL strategies, students demonstrated positive attitudes toward English speaking learning. They developed good leadership skills by creating an environment of responsibility, respect, trustfulness, and communication. Similarly, they knew that their contribution during the group work was essential to accomplish the assigned tasks. Moreover, during group work, learners enjoyed sharing their ideas, opinions, and feelings. It can be concluded that CL had positive effects on the formation of students' attitudes towards motivation for spoken communication in the classroom.

Finally, the study participants perceived CL strategies as helpful speaking participation resources. These strategies helped them to increase their security and participation while performing oral tasks. Therefore, their

motivation increased, too. It was possible because they received their peers' mutual help and support. All in all, it is reasonable to state that learners perceived CL strategies as an important language learning tool to development their motivation to speak in English.

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