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## THE ROLE OF COOPERATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING

### Abstract

In the article, the importance of cooperative language teaching at foreign language lessons is described. The author mentions about the advantages of fulfilling the given tasks through cooperative language teaching for the students mastering language better. Students unlike traditional teaching method sharing opinions with one-another freely, avoid the feelings of fear and anxiety, show a great interest to learning a foreign language and have successful results.

Besides, the role of a teacher in arranging the right teaching process, choosing materials, giving instructions is also mentioned in the article. Showing the importance of cooperative language teaching method, the author talks about the feelings of sincerity and self – confidence both teachers and students experience.

In the result, they achieve goals successfully in a whole team. In group strong students help passive ones and they cooperatively supporting one another, do their best to win not individually but with all the members of the group. Teachers in their own turn should keep under the control and help students if they have difficulties.

Such kind of productive method is of great importance in teaching and learning process of a foreign language.

**Keywords:** *competition, goal, achievement, effective, anxiety, benefit*

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## Kooperativ dil tədrisinin rolu

### Xülasə

Məqalədə xarici dil dərslərində kooperativ dil tədrisinin əhəmiyyətindən bəhs edilir. Müəllif, tələbələrin dilə daha yaxşı yiyələnməsi üçün verilən tapşırıqların kooperativ dil tədrisi üsulu ilə yerinə yetirilməsinin üstünlüklərini qeyd edir. Ənənəvi tədris metodundan fərqli olaraq, bu cür üsuldən istifadə edərkən onlar bir-biri ilə sərbəst şəkildə, qorxu və narahatlıq hissələrindən uzaq qalaraq xarici dilin öyrənilməsinə böyük maraq göstərir və uğurlu nəticə əldə edirlər. Bundan əlavə, məqalədə tədris prosesinin düzgün təşkil edilməsində, dərslər materiallarının seçilməsində müəllimin rolu da qeyd edilir.

Müəllif kooperativ dil tədrisinin əhəmiyyətindən danışarkən tələbələrin qrupun üzvləri ilə səmimi dostluq şəraitində işləyərək birlikdə məqsədlərinə daha asan çatdıqlarını vurğulayır. Qrupda olan güclü tələbələr təhsildə geridə qalan tələbələrə kömək edərək onları dəstəkləyir və məqsədə çatmaq üçün individual olaraq deyil, bütün qrup üzvləri ilə birlikdə əllərindən gələni edirlər. Müəllimlər öz növbələrində tələbələrə nəzarət altında saxlamalı və əgər çətinliklərlə üzləşsələr, onlara kömək etməlidirlər.

Bu tipli məhsuldar üsuldən istifadə xarici dilin öyrənilməsi və tədrisində böyük əhəmiyyət kəsb edir.

*Açar sözlər: rəqabət, məqsəd, nailiyyət, səmərəli, narahatlıq, fayda*

## Introduction

Today the main goal of teaching and learning foreign languages in the global world is developing language learners' ability to use target foreign language for communication to build firm relationship among different countries in all the fields. Especially after the Republic of Azerbaijan had gained an independence learning of the English language has become one of the most urgent issues. Therefore, the process of teaching English should be based on the communicative and functional approach besides, this process should be purposeful and systematic.

Language is a main fundamental part of total human behavior and it is used for interactive communication. Therefore, it is necessary to study communicative functions of a language. The students learning a foreign language should know how to talk to others realizing the facts and events, then perform actual production (speaking, writing) and comprehend (listening and reading). Comprehension and production are aspects of performance and competence.

While using interactive methods during the language lessons motivation, the nature of problem, research organization, presentation of the material should be taken into consideration.

Nowadays, no matter certain successes are gained in teaching foreign languages sometimes the results are not so desirable. From one side it is connected with the problems which both teachers and students come across, from the other side the relationship between a teacher and a student has not been organized correctly. From this point of view teaching of any foreign language is still the most urgent problem.

The role of relations between a teacher and a student in solving some problems faced in teaching process of a foreign language is of great importance. The right relations between a teacher and students improves quality and effectiveness of mastering a foreign language.

Besides, useful and correct methods chosen by a teacher to fulfil some tasks and exercises successfully, objective evaluation of students, the use of special ways for developing logical thinking, raising interest for learning a language are also purposes to achieve success. For these purposes teachers should benefit from an effective and stimulant sources, to carry out this necessary role.

The lessons should be built so that, even students who are not interested in learning a language, start to join the process by teacher 's effort through using motivative and effective methods. While teaching a foreign language, the role of individual approach to the learners should be taken into consideration too. As students are from different families, they have different characteristic features, psychology and level of thinking, teacher 's attitude to each of them should be individual.

The effectiveness of this process mostly depends on students' knowledge, skills and a teacher 's experience. Convenient environment that is highly equipped technology, foreign speaking atmosphere are also necessary for successful teaching and learning process.

One of the main principles of language teaching process is arranging the lessons according to the interests, demands and needs of students. Therefore, teaching of foreign languages particularly the English language which is considered to be an international language should be followed by students' ability to communicate and master it.

Cooperative learning is considered to be an effective method to develop students critical thinking ability, to exchange their knowledge with others for improving communicative and social skills. Cooperative learning as a communal activity in which learning a language is organized through mutual exchange which in its turn creates favorable condition to improve their ability to socialize and practice a foreign language. Learners are not only responsible for their own construction of knowledge, but also for making learning easier for the other group members.

Cooperative learning is efficient in reducing excitement and anxiety of learners creates a great interest for learning of a foreign language. Students become relaxed in a flexible learning

atmosphere. They try to be more cooperative than competitive to fulfil the given task sincerely and friendly to reach their aim together.

Researchers assert that cooperative language teaching is the best way to get students be interested in learning a foreign language. It is also of great benefit, because it allows both teachers and students to get acquainted with various types of teaching and learning styles which can be accommodated cooperatively. Students are able to learn how to use materials with the help of different activities together.

Besides they can use and evaluate various types of resources, journals, book and world wide web (Ozchevik, 2010:81).

Working in teams both teachers and students acquire a lot of benefits improving their ability to work cooperatively, supporting one another to gain success together. Members of the group engaging in group processing activities discuss their tasks according to their own skills interactively which greatly and effectively influences on learning a foreign language. They also learn to listen to one another share their knowledge and opinions freely, respect one another 's points of view which are very important for academic foreign language learning.

Working in pair and group work students avoid stress, fear as well as the feeling of shyness. They discuss the given task, sharing their opinions in order to express their thoughts easily without any excitement and in the result become more confident.

One of the main elements of an effective foreign language teaching is an interactive learning process. Students in this atmosphere not only learn a language, but also they master communicative skills! This teaching method makes the lessons more intensive and effective helping to improve the intelligence and thinking activity.

Through cooperative language teaching small groups and learners are involved to develop their skills and knowledge to acquire a foreign language cooperatively. They are able to exchange information as well as to help one another with grammar rules, sentence structures and vocabulary in friendly and free atmosphere. Pair and group work are of great importance for this purpose.

The main peculiarities of cooperative teaching method are to form students' ability of thinking and comprehending to master a language freely with great interest.

Implementing foreign language teaching cooperatively creates the basis for increasing student activity and strengthens the development process of learning a language.

Unlike traditional teaching methods which foster more competition than cooperation, modern language teaching methods are carried out through pair and group activities interactively. This type of teaching method helps to raise achievement of not only diligent and talented students, but also academically disabled ones as well. Implementing cooperative language teaching can easily build friendly and positive relationship among the students which gives them experience for future social and psychological development.

What are 5 features of cooperative learning?

1) *Positive interdependence.*

The assignments given to the students should be fair, each member should be responsible for other group members success.

2) *Face to face interaction.*

Students are too close to each-other physically, which is convenient for them to communicate easily with eye contact, gestures and mimics.

3) *Individual accountability.*

Each member of the group is aware of the role shared among the whole group members.

The task should be carried out individually serving one and the same purpose.

4) *Group processing.*

This process develops the skills of each group member, gives them change to give and get feedback.

5) *Social skills.*

This activity gives students an opportunity for interaction and communication. Besides, they are

encouraged by teachers to use the skills, like leadership, decision making, problem solving and other which make students believe in their ability being confident and sociable.

Cooperative language teaching is developed on two facets in terms of theory and in terms of practice.

Cooperative teaching method not only serves how to learn any language cooperatively during the lessons but also creates a favourable condition for them to attain content standards and develop their interpersonal skills needed for how to succeed both in their school life as well as in their private lives. Young people need to learn how to live with the others to make a go and make their life smarter and more interesting.

It also helps teachers to pinpoint their shortcomings and arrange their lessons more interactively giving freedom to students discuss and share the problems independently and friendly in groups.

Students work in small groups to accomplish learning goal with the guidance of the teacher (7).

To have successful results a great importance of how to use cooperative language teaching methods should be mentioned.

There are a lot of things should be done for arranging this process. First of all the level of the group members should be taken into consideration. The strength and weakness of the students should be balanced. Besides, to achieve the goal to create successful communication interpersonal and passive students should be work in the same group with extravert and more active students.

Choosing interesting materials is also important. Themes and topics for conversations should be selected according to the students interest.

1. Get the sts to tell any story. It can be current in the news or a traditional story.

2. For instance a teacher asks students write a story in 2 big groups (I group, II group). They put an extra character into their account each group describes different roles. Students are asked by the teacher that these stories will be read by other groups.

3. When they finished the members of the groups read each other's stories.

4. They put a chair at the front, get the class sitting in a horseshoe around it. This is the "hot seat". One person from one of the groups volunteers to play the extra character and answers questions from the members of the other groups. The volunteer sits in the hot seat and provides answers in role (Frank, Rinvoluchri, 2007:53).

To provide an opportunity to practice speaking, improving fluency than accuracy group works benefit is great. To achieve the main aim teachers, find ways of enabling as many students as possible to speak as much as possible.

Though all-class speaking activity is useful it takes up the whole lesson and offers very little speaking time to each individual student. It is a good idea to organize speaking activities in pair, three and small groups (Scrivener, 1994:196).

Cooperative language teaching provides immediate help for students with learning difficulties. Cooperative language teaching can be implemented through complementary instruction, team teaching and supportive learning activities.

Teachers gain more field-based practical knowledge of cooperative teaching. While cooperative teaching learners work coactive, cooperatively in heterogeneous groups of students.

In order to teach academic skills, a teacher needs to be directly addressed. Students are motivated while working in teams. In this way they both believe that such work will be beneficial and some proficiency in using teamwork skills.

There are some steps how students understand the need for the teamwork skill a teacher can do the followings to accomplish this.

Step 1.

- Ask students to make a list of social skills needed to develop group work. They emphasize one or two from the skills they list.
- Students should be presented a case for realizing that it is better to know the skill than not to know it.

- Using a role play that provides a counter-example to illustrate the need the skill.

#### Step 2.

Students should understand what the cooperative learning skill is, how and when to use the skill.

- Determine the skill in terms of verbal and nonverbal behaviors and explain precisely what students should do. This is done with T-Chart Teacher should give a direction then ask the class “What would this skill look like?” (non-verbal and verbal behaviours).
- Teacher demonstrates a model skill in front of the students explaining with certain and exact ideas, what the skill is.
- Students have to practice the skill twice in their groups before the lesson.

Students are allowed by a teacher to see the shape and form of these skills. Showing the students what these skills look like, clarifies the expectations from students or what they expect to see within their groups. The use of role playing can allow demonstration of the specific skills needed. Integrated cooperative behaviours into daily instruction immerses students in these skills before they are asked to use them independently (8).

Cooperative language learning is focused on the idea that teaching should make maximum use of cooperatives and activities. Unlike traditional teaching when strong and weak students should be educated separately, while cooperative language learning students are mixed to contribute and, are likely to scaffold each-other to raise language level of the whole class. Here all the students have to work cooperatively for one and the same goal. Students shouldn't work competitively against one-another, on the contrary they should work interactively to reach common goal. They have to use a foreign language as a means of communication. It lowers the anxiety of talking in a foreign language, they are not afraid of making mistakes (9).

Premise principles that underlie the interactive and cooperative nature of language are the followings (Richard, Rodgers, 2001:153).

- 1) Humans talk and communicate and it is considered the primary purpose of language.
- 2) Speech is organized as conversation.
- 3) Conversation operates according to a certain rules “maxims”.
- 4) One learns how these cooperative maxims are realized in one's native language.
- 5) One learns how the maxims are realized in a second language cooperatively and interactively.

Every member of the group has various ideas and skills. Fulfilling the given task in groups the members share their skills and make maximal benefit out of it. The effect of this approach is on cooperative work rather than on competitive work. Cooperative environment and various approaches to certain theme happen and the students should-think and consider whys and hows.

The teacher's role in this method differs from normal classroom settings.

The main role of a teacher is to provide the material, to set goals for the students help the monitor students in the work phrase.

It means cooperative language learning classrooms are much less teacher-centered than some other methods (Larsen-Freeman, 2000:67).

The learner's role is to work cooperatively to improve and practice their social skills. They should be really to accept criticism and also they should learn a foreign language in the absence of a teacher. One of the main roles of implementing cooperative language teaching is motivation, awarding and fair feedback by teachers and peers (11).

The students seem more energetic and active, and they got feedback from many more peers than in more traditional peer sessions. It gives them not only enthusiasm but also a chance to practice their speech and skills more positively. Motivation is related to practical rationality. The main idea in this field is we should be motivated to perform an action if we believe that we should perform it. Motivation is of special interest to educational psychologists, because of its crucial role in student learning.

Providing appropriate feedback a learner can repair problems with communication and control impute, managing their own understanding (Houston, 2009:29)

Teachers need to help learners make full use of what they do know and help them learn what they do not. According to Johnson cooperative learning is educational usage of little groups where students work together in to develop their own learning. The cooperative teaching method that dates back to old times is one of the teaching methods are often used in our country (11).

Cooperative teaching and learning supports group interaction that stimulates creative thinking such as collage work.

There is a difference between simple group work and group at that are formed according to the cooperative learning method. In cooperative learning students' efforts are awarded in the name of the group. Each member of the group tries to do his / her best to gain success for the whole group. Group members take responsibility for every work themselves for the sake of reaching common aim (12).

The teacher's task during cooperative teaching is to construct interactions between learners. To achieve this, it is essential for the teacher to organize student interactions in the context of academic tasks add at the same time prepare the learners for collaborative work with others.

Cooperative language learning provides more opportunities how to learn to comprehensible impute and output and the process of conversation (13). Cooperative learning requires a relaxed atmosphere in which students are not aggressive or feared. Learners have opportunities to rehearse their answers before being asked in from of the whole class. This increases learner's self-esteem and self - confidence another benefit of cooperative language teaching and learning is that it can provide more opportunities for use of new ideas and solutions which is more effective than competitive or individualistic learning.

### **Conclusion**

Compared with traditional instruction, cooperative learning promotes productivity more achievement and more opportunities for communication. The objective of foreign language teaching is not only to teach students grammar rules or vocabulary but also how to use the knowledge in practice to express their thoughts and ideas.

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