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The Effects of Using Cooperative Learning Strategies on EFL Students' Motivation

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Resumen

El estudio de inglés como lengua extranjera ha incrementado durante los últimos años, lo que significa que muchas personas tratan de aprender el idioma. Sin embargo, la falta de motivación puede ser una barrera que impide el correcto aprendizaje del mismo. El Aprendizaje Cooperativo (CL), cuyo objetivo es agrupar estudiantes dentro del aula de clases para realizar actividades en grupo, puede ser una manera para incrementar la motivación en estudiantes. Se seleccionó y analizó 16 estudios acerca de los efectos del uso de estrategias de CL, percepciones de estudiantes y docentes en cuanto a las mismas estrategias y finalmente los beneficios y retos que pueden surgir mientras se usan dichas estrategias. Los resultados muestran que el uso de CL incrementa la motivación y además otras habilidades sociales y académicas dentro del aula de clases. Sin embargo, algunos docentes consideran que la aplicación de dichas estrategias puede ser difícil de habilitar debido a la falta de tiempo en el aula y la falta de conocimiento para dirigir cada grupo de trabajo apropiadamente.

Palabras clave: motivación, motivación intrínseca, motivación extrínseca, estrategias de cl, efl esl estudiantes

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Abstract

The study of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) has increased nowadays, which means that people are trying to learn the language. However, the lack of motivation can be a barrier during the learning process. Cooperative Learning (CL), whose objective is to group students within the classroom to carry out group activities, can be a way to increase student motivation. Sixteen studies were selected and analyzed regarding the effects of using CL strategies, perceptions of students and teachers regarding the same strategies, and finally the benefits and challenges that may arise while using those strategies. The results showed that the use of CL increases motivation and also other social and academic skills in the classroom. However, some teachers consider that the application of those strategies can be difficult to enable due to the time crisis in the classroom and the lack of knowledge about how to manage each group appropriately.

Keywords: cooperative learning, intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, efl esl learners

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to all of the people that have been present during my studies. First, this thesis is for my parents who have supported me and given all of their help for me to keep studying. Secondly, my brothers who have helped me emotionally to keep studying and doing my best

Introduction

English has been extensively used nowadays as it is one of the most important languages worldwide. This fact highlights the importance of English in different fields of human life, particularly in the educational setting (Qi, 2016). However, there are learners that show difficulties in the classroom when trying to master the English language successfully. One cause why students fail while learning the English language can be the lack of motivation (Gilakjani et al., 2012).

Gumartifa and Sirajuddin (2021) state that motivation is an important factor to take into account in successfully learning a language. Also, they recommend that motivational aspects need to be considered by both, teachers and students to improve the language learning process in and outside the classroom. In the field of education, motivation is defined as the desire that students have to learn something (Anjomshoa & Sadighi, 2015). Motivation, in a general way, however, carries an extensive definition: on the one hand, intrinsic or integrative motivation is the one in which individuals develop activities just for their inherent satisfaction (like someone playing in a music band because it is fun, and the person enjoys it) rather than for external rewards. On the other hand, extrinsic or instrumental motivation has to do with external elements to the individual and unrelated to the activity they are performing (Reena & Bonjour, 2010), like someone doing their homework promptly to avoid making their parents angry. Extrinsic motivation is known as the most controlled form of motivation because people might change their behavior when something or someone else influences them positively or negatively (Donald et al., 2019).

According to Al-Mahrooqi and Denman (2014), both types of motivation are essential elements for students in the classroom. However, intrinsic motivation seems to be more influential in the success of another language acquisition, which is the reason

why pedagogical strategies need to be considered for enhancing the level of intrinsic motivation of EFL learners.

One of those strategies that can be implemented in EFL classrooms is Cooperative Learning (CL), which involves instructional use of small groups that has the objective of enhancing the level of learning among the students working together in those groups (Johnson et al., 2013, as cited in Johnson & Johnson, 2014). The main goal in some cases consists of increasing students' interaction and participation; moreover, students can also learn from others, which will be beneficial for them to increase their educational competencies. In addition, Abass (2008) expresses that CL can be a good strategy for applying in classrooms to increase students' motivation since they can perform better when they interact with their classmates and receive positive comments from the group members.

All the above findings stress the importance of studying what are the effects of using the CL strategies in relation to students' motivation in the classroom. It is also important to consider students' and teachers' perceptions of the use of this strategy with regard to students' motivation since they are the principal actors in the language training and language experience. Finally, to study the benefits and challenges of the use of CL strategies is also transcendent in this research.

CHAPTER I

Background

The English language has served as the mean of communication among people whose first Language is not English. According to Cifuentes et al. (2019) the globalization has allowed this language to become a tool of knowledge of science and humanities. As a result; many countries implement English language teaching in their curriculums to boost the level of English on the students. However, there are students that face difficulties trying to learn the language, which is a disadvantage when these students try to master that language. One reason to fail while learning the English language can be the lack of students' motivation towards learning a new language (Gilakjani, et al., 2012).

Gumartifa and Sirajuddin (2021) state that motivation is an important factor to consider in the process of learning a language successfully. Also, they recommend that motivational aspects need to be considered by both, teachers and students, to improve the language learning process in and outside the classroom.

Motivation carries an extensive definition since there is not just one kind of motivation that students can demonstrate in the classroom. Donald et al. (2019) state that there are types of motivation that can appear in students according to what they develop in the classroom or what activities they are exposed to. On the one hand, intrinsic motivation is the one that individuals develop autonomously. This means that people might develop one or more activities just for their inherent satisfaction rather than for external rewards. On the other hand, external motivation is known as the most controlled form of motivation because people might change their behavior when something or someone else influences them positively or negatively (Donald et al., 2019). In addition, "when externally motivated, the person is driven by externally controlled contingencies such as rewards (e.g., financial incentives or social recognition)

and punishments (e.g., financial penalties or social exclusion) rather than values or interests" (Donald et al., 2019, p. 4).

The Cooperative Learning (CL) strategy is an instructional use of small groups that have the objective of enhancing the level of learning among the students working together (Johnson et al, 2013, as cited in Johnson & Johnson, 2014). The objective consists of increasing students' interaction and participation with their classmates. Students can also learn from others, which will be beneficial for them to increase their educational competencies. Moreover, Abass (2008) expresses that CL can be applied in classrooms to increase students' motivation since they can perform better when interacting with their classmates and receiving positive comments from the group members.

The CL approach has been used in multiple educational settings for specific purposes, such as increasing the level of students' performance in the classroom, decreasing students' level of anxiety and stress (Suwantarathip & Wichadee, 2010) Nowadays, educators try to obtain better results from students through the application of CL; this technique also facilitates learning a new language as in the case of English as a Foreign Language (EFL).

Furthermore, Anjomshoa and Sadighi (2015) explain that motivation is one of the most important aspects that needs to be present while someone is learning a language. In the field of education, motivation is defined as the desire that students have to learn something (Anjomshoa and Sadighi, 2015). Therefore, Abbas (2012) explains that using the CL strategy has some benefits for students. For example, CL enhances learners' satisfaction when they work together. As a result, they are motivated because students also develop self-esteem when working in groups.

To conclude, Zhou (2012) suggests that a possible solution to increase students' motivation is the use of CL instruction. The author suggests that the application of CL is

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effective because it can raise the level of motivation and produce positive social outcomes. CL is becoming a useful technique used by teachers in EFL contexts.

Problem statement

Yuliani et al. (2021) state that one problem of the use of CL in classrooms can be the lack of time management since students do not pay attention to the instruction and are not used to doing experiments or discussions, which makes the learning process less effective. Also, Artini et al., (2017) consider that it is better to pay attention to how to apply this technique since it is considered time-consuming to choose a good technique to form the groups. In other words, it can be said that the application of CL techniques on EFL students' motivation has some constraints during its application, such as time consumption. However, the use of CL can also provide opportunities for the students to exchange ideas and support each other with different opinions that will help them to improve their learning outcomes (Yuliani et al., 2021).

According to what Tran (2019) indicates about learners' motivation in EFL contexts, it has been demonstrated that CL has a direct influence on students' outcomes, motivation, and the development of cognitive and metacognitive strategies in the classroom. Moreover, the use of CL strategies can also be useful to increase students' skills and proficiency in the classroom. Namaziandost et al. (2019) analyze the impact of the CL approach with regard to students' oral proficiency in the classroom and state that CL as a positive impact on students' intrinsic motivation and students' oral proficiency. Learners increase their intrinsic motivation because of the amusing environment they find when working with their peers. On the other hand, they increase their oral proficiency since students have more opportunities to talk to their classmates when developing activities in groups.

Also, in a Chen's study (2017), the author says that students feel inspired and motivated when they work in groups. Moreover, after using the CL strategy with the

students, they realized that they can solve problems quickly when they work together. These findings are relevant because both teachers and students state that working in groups influences positively the students' outcomes.

This study attempts to collect and analyze the data already presented to identify what are the effects of the use of CL strategies regarding motivational aspects on EFL students since there is limited information that relates the use of CL techniques and students' behavior after its application in EFL contexts. It is also important to consider students' and teachers' perceptions of the use of CL with regard to students' motivation. One example among other research considered for this study, researched students' and teachers' perceptions of the CL strategy and the effects of its application on EFL students. According to Artini et al. (2017) both students and teachers perceive that learning a language through collaborative work can be a good technique option to enhance their level of understanding when learning. At the end of the study, the majority of the students felt that they have better chances to learn when they were grouped to do activities in the classroom. In other words, motivation as a fundamental teaching strategy should be considered in the field of teaching-learning a second or a foreign language (Artini et al., 2017).

Rationale

As English learners are often demotivated to learn the language, certain strategies can be examined to enhance students' attitudes in the learning process (Bahous et al., 2011). That is why some researchers suggest the use of CL strategies to enhance students' participation and motivation in the classroom.

It can be said that it is worth analyzing the effects of using CL strategies in relation to students' outcomes regarding motivational aspects in the classroom, not only for EFL learners but in any educational context they belong to. For example, some authors, such as Wang (2012), have analyzed the effects of using CL on finance and economic

students' motivation. The results demonstrate that CL indeed can improve their motivation. Also, these findings can be explained for the reason that higher self-efficacy, more successful experiences, setting a group goal, and a positive relationship with classmates can increase motivation. In addition, Marashi and Khatami (2017) conducted a study in which students were tested according to some strategies for forming groups and analyzed the results of these strategies. The strategies used in that study were roundtables and working in pairs. Both approaches resulted in a positive impact on the students' outcomes since it was proved that they increased their motivation while learning another language.

Research questions

1.   What are the effects of the use of cooperative learning strategies on EFL students' motivation?

2.   What are the students' and teachers' perceptions about the use of cooperative learning strategies in an EFL classroom?

3.   What are the benefits and challenges regarding the use of cooperative learning strategies in EFL students?

General objective

To study the effects of using cooperative learning strategies on EFL students' motivation.

Specific objectives

1. To determine the effects of the use of cooperative learning strategies on EFL students' motivation.

2. To determine students' and teachers' perceptions about the use of cooperative learning strategies on EFL students' motivation.

3. To determine the benefits and challenges regarding the use of

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cooperative learning strategies in EFL students' motivation.

CHAPTER II

Theoretical Framework

English Language in Education

"In the last decades, it has been clear that the world is becoming more a global village and English is its lingua franca" (Seidlhofer, 2001, as cited in Bayyurt, 2006, p. 233). In other words, English is becoming a global language nowadays. Also, the number of non-native speakers of English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is increasing fast, reaching almost the same number of native speakers (Graddol, 1999, as cited in Bayyurt, 2006). Therefore, it is important to identify the factors that might influence the students who are trying to master that language. One of those factors is motivation.

Understanding Motivation

According to Gilakjani et al. (2012), the success of any action most of the time depends on the desire that individuals progress to carry out activities that they demand to do. "In general, people have come to refer to this psychological factor – the impulse that generates the action – as motivation" (Gilakjani et al., 2012, p. 9). Moreover, Zhou (2012) mention that motivation in students is the desire they develop in order to perform and complete tasks in which they are engaged. Also, the author suggests that motivation is one of the key elements in succeeding in language learning since it influences other factors such as self-autonomy, persistence, effort, and attention, among others.

Despite the fact that the word motivation is very simple, it is hardly known that people might develop not only a different amount of it (level of motivation) but also different orientations of motivation (types of motivation). Types of motivation refer to the basic objectives or attitudes that concern the why of actions (Ryan & Deci, 2000). An example provided by Ryan and Deci (2000) claims that a student can be motivated to do

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homework because of curiosity or self-interest in it, alternatively, because the individual only wants the approval of the parents or the teachers. In this example, "the amount of motivation does not necessarily vary, but the nature and focus of the motivation being evidenced certainly does" (Ryan & Deci, 2000, pp. 54-55).

Types of Motivation

There are two types of motivation: intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. In the case of EFL/ESL, learners are intrinsically motivated by the desire to learn another language and develop activities that might help them to achieve that goal. On the other hand, learners are extrinsically motivated because they develop activities for certain praises or rewards such as grades. In other words, performing well becomes necessary to earn those rewards (Ng & Ng, 2014).

Since motivation is an important aspect to be considered in EFL students, the lack of this aspect can be an issue for teachers and students in the classroom. According to Vakilifard et al. (2020), demotivation is the flip side of motivation and has a negative impact on EFL/ESL learners' outcomes. Also, Baba Khouya (2018) explains that demotivation in EFL learners is a big obstacle for them that makes difficult the learning processes. For instance, the author suggests that learners who are demotivated find it difficult to succeed in certain areas of the language such as listening or speaking skills. In other words, it is crucial to be conscious of the negative impact of demotivation and the consequences that it might lead to.

Next, the role of the teacher in EFL/ESL classrooms is vital in regard to boosting motivation among students. As Donald et al. (2019) mention, extrinsic motivation is known as the most controlled form of motivation; therefore, the teacher might have the control of it by using certain strategies that will be beneficial to the students since they will be driven to enjoy and enhance their interests towards English language learning.

One of the most claimed strategies used by teachers to increase the level of motivation in EFL learners is the Cooperative Learning strategy (CL).

Understanding Cooperative Learning

The CL strategy (also known as Collaborative Learning) is a technique used in classrooms in order to maximize group work among the students. This strategy involves other theoretical perspectives in education such as behaviorism, socio-cultural theory, and others that have supported the benefits of CL strategies in classrooms (Jacobs et al. 2008). "The term cooperative learning dates back at least to the 1970s when a great deal of research and practical work began on discovering how best to harness the power of cooperation to promote learning" (Jacobs et al., 2008, p. 2). Nowadays, educators still use this technique in classrooms to promote participation among students.

Now, how can we incorporate CL in the classroom? First, according to Johnson and Johnson (1999), there are two types of CL strategies: formal and informal CL, which have to follow specific stages. Formal CL applies for one or several classes in which learners are grouped together to achieve certain tasks or assignments and cooperation is the key element to set the goal of the task. In the first stage, the teacher specifies the objectives of the lesson and decides the size of the groups (3-4 students) in which each student is assigned a specific role. Secondly, the teacher explains the assignment, provides the criteria for the success of the task, and explains the social skills to be used during the activity. Third, each group is monitored by the teacher in order to provide group assistance and to increase the level of participation, so learners can receive positive reinforcement to complete the activity accurately. Lastly, students are assessed and the task is evaluated.

The other type is the informal CL, which consists on providing a short space of a certain class to the students to work and demonstrate their knowledge about a specific material that has been taught during the session.

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For Johnson et al, (2013), as cited in Johnson & Johnson (2014), the CL strategy is to enhance the level of learning among the students when they work together in small groups. This strategy has been used in multiple educational settings for specific purposes, such as increasing the level of students' performance in the classroom, decreasing students' level of anxiety and stress, and enhancing students' motivation. Nowadays, educators try to obtain better results from students through the application of CL strategies since this technique also facilitates learning a new language as in the case of EFL/ESL. Finally, explains that using the CL strategy has some benefits for students: they start to be involved in the learning process and to interact with their classmates taking the advantage of the support of them when working in groups (Abbas, 2008).

CHAPTER III

Literature Review

Motivation in the Classroom

There is a strong relation between EFL learners' motivational aspects and their proficiency in the classroom. For instance, Rezaee et al. (2015) conducted a study to analyze the relation between the two aspects mentioned above. The results of this study showed that students who were motivated when they performed certain tasks or experienced a positive environment in the classroom, were well impacted in relation to students who were demotivated: those students experienced anxiety because of the considerable difficulty of the tasks assigned by their teacher. Motivation is a key aspect to consider when developing proficiency. Therefore, researchers highly recommend instructors to permanently use different strategies, such as CL in order to enhance their students' motivation.

Effects of CL on EFL Students' Motivation

Zhou (2012) states that a possible solution to increase students' motivation is the use of CL strategies. The author suggests that the application of CL is effective because it increases motivation levels and produces positive social and academic outcomes. This is achieved when the following essential elements of cooperation are considered: 1. Positive interdependence, 2. Individual accountability, 3. Face-to-Face interaction, 4. Social skills, and 5. Group processing. Understanding these five elements of cooperation allows teachers to use CL accurately according to learners' needs or circumstances every time they consider it needed (Johnson & Johnson, 1999). In short, using CL strategies properly might be a good method for enhancing students' motivation.

According to what Tran (2019) indicates about learners' motivation in EFL contexts, CL has a direct influence on students' outcomes, motivation, and development of cognitive and metacognitive strategies in the classroom. Moreover, the use of CL strategies can

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also be useful to increase students' language skills and proficiency. For example, Pan and Wu (2013) conducted a study to analyze the effects of CL on EFL students' motivation. The results showed positive effects not only on the students' motivation but also in their reading skills compared to traditional methods. The authors highly suggest to start using CL strategies since it seems to replace traditional strategies on reading exercises.

Marashi and Khatami (2017) conducted a study to analyze the effects of CL strategies in relation to creativity and motivational aspects. The first result of this study showed that the students who were instructed through the use of this technique showed positive effects on their creativity as they worked together to complete tasks in relation to the ones who worked alone to develop the same task. The second major result showed that the level of motivation also increased with the use of CL strategies. The authors of this study state that these results can be explained due to the fact that CL decreases negative aspects in students, such as the amount of stress and anxiety. Moreover, this strategy provides a positive interactive environment among the students who work in groups.

In another study, Namaziandost et al. (2019) analyzed the effects of CL on oral proficiency on intermediate EFL learners. The findings showed a significant improvement in the learners' speaking skills after using CL techniques. Moreover, results demonstrated that learners' intrinsic motivation was enhanced since they had the opportunity to communicate with their classmates and had a positive relation with their peers. In other words, it can be said that using this strategy might be beneficial for EFL oral skills improvement and to master the training language as they increase the level of motivation when completing tasks in groups.

In addition, Marashi and Khatami (2017) conducted a study in which students were tested according to some strategies for forming groups roundtables and pair work.

The authors analyzed the results of these strategies regarding students' outcomes in the classroom. Both approaches resulted in a positive impact on their academic performance since it was proved that CL enhances students' motivation while learning another language by working with others.

Finally, in a study conducted by Chen (2017), it has been mentioned that the students felt inspired and motivated when they work in groups. First, when using the CL strategy with the learners, the author realized that they can solve problems quickly. Secondly, the author also analyzed perceptions, and both teachers and students state that working in groups influences the learners' outcomes positively.

Challenges in Using CL Strategies

Although CL strategies are a good way to forming students to work in the classrooms, educators must be aware of drawbacks that might arise when using them. For example, Yuliani et al. (2021) state that one challenge found of the use of CL can be the lack of time management since time is considered insufficient to complete the activities of the learning process. Also, students are not used to doing discussions in groups, which makes the learning process less effective. Also, Artini et al. (2017) consider that it is paramount to apply this technique carefully since forming groups is frequently time-consuming. However, the use of CL can also provide opportunities for the students to exchange ideas and support each other with different opinions that will help them to improve their learning outcomes (Yuliani et al., 2021).

A case study by Alghamdy (2019) also analyzed the effects of CL strategies. The results showed that learners enhanced their language skills, cultivated friendship with their classmates, and improved their responsibility in their groups, among others. However, this strategy has some implications that the teacher should be aware of; for example, some students did not have the opportunity to share their opinions in the group. Others did not want to participate or let others to do the job for them. Therefore, it is

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recommended for educators who plan to use this strategy in the classroom to find an effective way to supervise and distribute the groups in order to improve learners' administration and efficacy in the groups.

Also, Azizinezhad et al. (2013) analyzed the effects of CL on EFL learners. Despite the fact that those learners enhanced their motivation in the classroom after the application of this technique, the authors suggest that CL has some limitations towards EFL learners. If the teacher does not pay attention to the students work during the application of this technique, it would not be unusual to find out that one person did most (or all) of the work in the group. Also, Zhou (2012) considered CL time-consuming since it is difficult to teach a certain topic with the cooperative approach. These limitations need to be considered when applying CL in EFL classrooms.

Listening to Students' and Teachers' Perceptions of CL Strategies

Artini et al. (2017) researched students' and teachers' perceptions of CL strategies and the effects of their application on EFL students. This study concluded that both students and teachers perceived that learning a language through CL can be a good technique to enhance the level of understanding. At the end of the study, the majority of the students felt that they learn better when they are grouped to develop activities in the classroom. In other words, CL is a fundamental teaching strategy that should be considered in the field of teaching-learning a second or a foreign language. Similarly, Alghamdy (2019) found that students perceive that they improve their relationship with their classmates when working in groups; moreover, that it is easier and faster to learn a certain topic. Finally, Chen (2017) shows that students perceive: a) a positive learning experiences with their classmates when they work together, b) tasks are easier to develop, c) their language skills increase.

On the other hand, Bui et al. (2021) explain that while some students considered that CL is a good technique for working in groups, others think that CL is not effective since they experienced conflicts during the application of this technique.

CHAPTER IV

Research Methodology

A well-detailed search was carried out in order to find the specific information that has been analyzed in order to answer the research questions. Also, this paper is based on empirical research, which refers to study a common phenomenon by following a planned process to analyze the data being observed (Hedges & Cooper). Research synthesis combines evidence over a certain domain and identifies possible research gaps that might require new primary studies (Mosteller & Colditz, 1996). The information was collected from online databases such as ERIC, ScienceDirect, Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), and Google Scholar. The articles that are used for this research need to meet the following criteria: First, the studies have to be performed in EFL/ESL contexts. Second, they have to be empirical research that contain information about the effects of using cooperative learning strategies on EFL/ESL learners. Third, the majority of them have to be conducted ten years ago in order to find relevant and current information. The keywords and terms for this study are *1. Cooperative learning, 2. Intrinsic motivation, 3. Extrinsic motivation, 4. EFL/ESL learners.*

CHAPTER V

Data Analysis

This chapter shows the analysis of the data of 16 research studies that were selected and organized in different in order to answer the research questions of this study. The data will be presented in the following order: a) The effects of using CL strategies on EFL learners' motivation, b) Teachers' and students' perceptions of the use of CL strategies and the effect on motivation, and finally, c) Benefits and challenges of the use of CL strategies.

For a clear demonstration of the data, the most relevant information has been organized in different tables. Table 1 shows eight out of the 16 studies that contain information about the effects of the use of CL strategies, table 2 contains 4 studies about students and teachers' perceptions of CL, and table 3 shows 5 studies that mention the benefits and challenges of the use of this technique. They include the author/authors and the results from the different studies that will contribute to answer the research questions of this study.

Effects of CL Strategies on EFL Students

Table 1

Author/Year	Effects				
	Increase of motivation	Enhancement of language skills	Improvement of social skills	Development of cognitive and metacognitive strategies	Development of creativity
Al-Mahrooqi & Denman (2014)	X				
Azizinezhad et al. (2013)	X	X	X		
Chen (2017)	X				
Marashi & Khatami (2017)	X				X
Namaziandost et al (2019)	X	X	X		
Pan & Wu (2013)	X	X			
Tran (2019)	X	X		X	
Zhou (2012)	X	X	X		

Table 1 shows the effects of CL strategies on students that might be beneficial for their learning process. The results of the data collected demonstrates that CL strategies increase both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Also, learners enhance their language skills, as found in five different studies Moreover, they develop effective social skills. Other findings show that students enhanced also their cognitive and metacognitive strategies, as found in Tran's study (2019), and also creativity, as explained in Marashi and Khatami's research (2017).

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The most significant effect indicated in these studies is that students enhanced their intrinsic and extrinsic motivation when working together. This finding can be explained because some factors that are necessary in cooperation such as, 1. Positive interdependence, 2. Individual accountability, 3. Face-to-Face interaction, 4. Social skills, and 5. Group processing, also allow learners to create an amusing environment that they find it enjoyable to learn. As a result, they are intrinsically motivated because of this positive classroom climate.

Some of the studies previously mentioned report that learners' motivation is enhanced when they are engaged in the classroom activities based on CL strategies. This fact can be explained since the learners found it fun and enjoyable to learn in groups; also, it has been proved that CL strategies facilitate and support a good atmosphere within the members of the groups (Namaziandost et al., 2019). On the other hand, the increase of extrinsic motivation in learners can be explained because of social factors, such as the attitudes of family members, teachers, and classmates. For example, in Al-Mahrooqi and Denman's study (2014), since the students received positive comments from their classmates and teachers, learners were inspired for their good performance in the classroom when working together with their classmates; they were extrinsically motivated with praises and extra grades at school. Nevertheless, results showed that CL makes a significant impact on the students' intrinsic motivation rather than their extrinsic motivation (Al-Mahrooqi & Denman, 2014).

Moreover, intrinsic motivation can also be raised because of the positive atmosphere and interactive language in the classroom (Azizinezhad et al. 2013). For instance, Marashi and Khatami (2017) explained that the use of CL strategies provides the opportunity to share ideas naturally, which allows the learners to create a more comfortable, stimulating and amusing learning environment. Another reason why intrinsic motivation increases can be because learners develop and experience self-confidence when they work in small groups and interact with their classmates (Marashi

& Khatami 2017). Also, it was found that learners enjoyed working in groups because they had experienced good moments while working with their peers; they consider that using this technique is more interactive than using traditional methods in which they do not have the opportunity to interact with their classmates as much as they do by using CL strategies (Chen, 2017).

Furthermore, CL provides students with the chance to construct a strong relationship among their peers. Also, this technique can be an effective strategy to be implemented in EFL classrooms with more interactive approaches and frequent interaction between learners (Tran, 2019). For instance, Pan and Wu (2013) state that when students work in groups, they have the opportunity to interact, which allows them to help each other during groups discussion; also, they are extrinsically motivated because they sometimes receive peer support and encouragement. As a result, learners start to devote more time to study and enjoy working in groups more than listening to their teacher reading texts. In conclusion, learners are also extrinsically motivated to learn English when they work in groups because of the positive relation that they can have with their classmates.

The second positive effect of CL strategies is that it enhanced students' language skills, according to Azizinezhad et al. (2013), Namaziandost et al. (2019), Pan and Wu (2013), Tran (2019), Zhou (2012). For instance, in the study conducted by Pan and Wu (2013), it was demonstrated that students, who were instructed by CL, from different proficiency levels, the medium- and low-proficiency groups performed significantly better on reading comprehension skills than those students who received traditional instruction. In this study, more than enhancing their motivation, they also enhanced their reading skills by the use of CL strategies. Also, in Namaziandost et al.' study (2019), students increased their oral skills. The results of this study can be explained because some factors. The students who worked using CL strategies had more opportunities to talk in

the groups and also, they were encouraged to speak, so students became more confident and willing to talk.

The third positive effect of CL strategies is that they enhanced students' social skills according to Azizinezhad et al. (2013), Namaziandost et al. (2019), and Zhou (2012). For example, in Namaziandost et al.'s study (2019), the authors state that when students work in groups their success would benefit their classmates. Students working in groups, support each other and provide positive interpersonal support, which also increases the level of intrinsic motivation on learners. Moreover, Zhou (2012) concludes that CL strategies can also benefit students' social outcomes by receiving positive comments from their classmates. Thus, CL can be a good strategy for shy, insecure, and even uninterested learners since peer support can be a powerful motivator for them.

Finally, it was also proved that CL strategies enhanced the level of creativity of students. Marashi and Khatami (2017) state that students developed thinking skills such as creativity, problem solving, and discovery learning, which can be possible because of the route and processes that students experienced while working in groups.

In summary, the use of CL strategies has many effects that are connected to students' motivation in the classroom; students who enjoy developing activities in groups, also feel motivated by their classmates, parents, or teachers. Moreover, students are motivated because they develop certain skills that make them feel confident; as a result, they feel better and perform better in class which develops their intrinsic motivation towards leaning a language.

Teachers' and Students' Perceptions

Students' and teachers' perceptions were also analyzed in order to answer the second research question and to find out what they feel about the use of CL strategies regarding students' motivation. The data analyzed is presented in the following table.

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Teachers' and Students' Perceptions of the Use of CL Strategies

Table 2

Authors/Year	Students' perceptions	Teachers' perceptions
Artini et al. (2017)	81.3% of the students have better chances to learn.	There is limited time available. CL is complicated to implement.
Alghamdy (2019)	Students improve relationships. Students learn easier and faster.	
Bui et al. (2021)	Students were able to solve conflicts.	
Chen (2017)	Students perceived positive leaning experiences with their classmates. Students felt responsibility of work. Students perceived tasks easier and an increase on their language skills.	

Table 2 shows four different studies about students' and teachers' perceptions about the use of CL strategies in the classroom analyzed in which the information is widely varied. For example, in Artini et al.'s study (2017), students' perception about the use of CL remains in the chances they have to learn since they consider that CL provides them positive support from their peers, which facilitates their interaction and learning; also, they find it satisfactory to work in groups. However, teachers' perceptions are somewhat different. For example, they consider that CL cannot be effective because it is difficult to implement long topics in a short time. Also, teaching through the use of CL is complicated and time consuming. This can be cause because there are inconsistences between what the teachers planned and what was executed. Also, because of teachers'

inconfidence and limited knowledge when they try to implement this strategy in the classroom.

Moreover, in Alghamdy's study (2019), students' perceptions were analyzed, which provided the following information: Learners felt that CL improves their relationship with their classmates and also, they learn more easily and fast. The first point can be explained because CL enables the students to interact and spend more time with their classmates. For example, some students revealed that they started to like English classes because they could work in groups and interact more with their friends. Regarding the second point, students felt that learning through CL is faster than learning through individual methods. Moreover, they stated that they learn better because they can help each other within the groups. Students can achieve cooperation through assistance or even in group discussions in order to share and compare their ideas.

Students also felt a relaxing classroom environment, which leads to develop oral skills, responsibility in the classroom, and find activities easier as these normally are. Chen (2017) stated that some students perceive that CL has some benefits in their learning process. For example, they felt that they improved their oral skills. This fact is because learners started to feel more confident in small groups and they became less afraid of talking. Another reason why oral skills were enhanced can be since they started to be more responsible in the classroom as they were afraid of losing face by bad performances. As a result, learners began to make extra efforts and these actions leaded to perform the task better in the groups.

Nevertheless, as explained by Bui et al. (2021), some students experienced a tedious environment while working in groups; for instance, students had different conflicts within the groups that could be caused by lack of communication or lack of knowledge about how to manage the groups by the teacher. Although students felt this environment, most of them stated that they were able to solve those conflicts and

continue working on the task assigned by the teacher. This information supports the idea of the great impact of CL on which students increase their social skills through their capacity of solving hard conflicts or sharing responsibilities (Bui et al., 2021).

Benefits and Challenges of the Use of CL Strategies

In this section, the benefits and challenges will be analyzed in order to answer the third research question of the study (What are the benefits and challenges regarding the use of cooperative learning in EFL students?).

Benefits

As it has been analyzed, the results of different studies show that the use of CL has some positive effects on learners: 1) Increase of motivation: Studies showed that the use of CL strategies enhanced learners' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. On one hand, intrinsic motivation is enhanced when learners start to feel an amusing environment in the class and have a positive relationship with their classmates and they enjoy learning. On the other hand, extrinsic motivation is enhanced when students receive positive reinforcement and comment from the peers in the groups. 2) Enhancement of language skills: When using the strategies already mentioned, students seemed to improve their academic skills, such as writing and oral skills in the classroom. 3) Improvement of social skills: Also, students started to connect more with their peers and solve problems with them, which led them to create a better social environment with their classmates. 4) Development of creativity: When grouping students, they are able to solve tasks easily and quickly. Cooperation in the groups is a good way to enhance their manner to solve problems in groups.

Challenges

Challenges of Using CL Strategies in EFL Learners

Table 3

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Authors	Challenges				
	Motivation disappears	Conflicts in the groups appears	CL is Time-consuming	Lack of knowledge about CL techniques	There is a monotonous atmosphere
Alghamdy (2019)		X		X	
Artini et al. (2017)			X		X
Bui et al. (2021)		X			
Wu y Tao (2022)	X				
Zhou (2012)			X	X	

Table 3 represents 5 different studies that show the challenges of using CL strategies with EFL/ESL students. As shown, it is noticeable that the implementation of CL strategies has a number of challenges: a) It is time-consuming, b) There is lack of teachers' knowledge about how to properly implement this strategy in classrooms, c) Motivation disappears in certain periods of time, when after three weeks of CL, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation decrease, which means that teachers need to consider various strategies to apply CL in order to control students' motivation. d) There is a possibility of conflicts among the members of each group and, e) Students might feel a monotonous atmosphere.

The main challenge of CL strategies is that they are time-consuming; this information has been documented (Artini et al., 2017; Zhou, 2012). As said by Artini et al., (2017), the allocation of time can be an obstacle to implement this strategy in the classroom. Also, as it is considered time-consuming, teachers might have no time for doing what had been planned to work in the classroom. Something similar occurs in Zhou (2012): time crisis is the main problem while implementing CL strategies; time

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management is difficult not only when attempting to apply this technique properly, but when trying to use such strategies in every single class.

Second, conflicts between students might also arise while working in groups. This information has been collected in some studies (Alghamdy, 2019; Bui et al., 2021). As stated by Alghamdy (2019), some learners felt that there is not good atmosphere when working in groups because *weak* ones did not work hard; also, some students did not provide everyone with the opportunity to participate in the groups. Moreover, Bui et al. (2021) stated that 66.7% of them in the study argued during the application of this technique. Moreover, they felt distracted when they were supposed to work in the assigned task provided by the teacher, which means that students are not learning well since they are creating conflicts among them, which will lead to create bad relationships with their peers. Also, as mentioned by Azizinezhad et al., (2013), CL can be difficult because the task being proposed to the learners is usually done just by one person in the group. Therefore, that CL strategies might not be effective because the main goal, which is increase interaction and participation, is not being accomplished.

Next, Wu and Tao (2022) mention that after the implementation of CL strategies, Learners' motivation tend to decrease. After one week of CL, students increase intrinsic and extrinsic motivation significantly. But after three weeks of CL, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation decrease.

Zhou (2012) states that the application of CL cannot be effective because of time crisis and lack of teachers' professionalism in applying CL activities. These problems can result in the decrease of the effectiveness of CL strategies since teachers are not taking advantage of the time available during the different sessions.

Lastly, despite CL enhances motivation, a monotonous atmosphere in the classroom might take place. This challenge can be explained because of limited strategies of grouping used by teachers (e.g. students getting together with the same

partners again and again, which might make them feel bored or demotivated) and limited time to teach extensive topics that, evidently, require long periods of time. For that reason, it is suggested that teachers collect and use varied strategies in the classroom (Artini et al., 2017).

CHAPTER VI

Conclusions and Recommendations

The main purpose of this study was to analyze the effects of CL strategies on EFL learners' motivation. After the examination of 16 different studies, their results and conclusions were considered in order to answer the research questions of the present study. Additionally, more information regarding the use of CL and students' proficiency improvement is provided.

Regarding the first research question, which is related to the effects of CL strategies on EFL learners' motivation, eight out of the 16 studies concluded that those strategies have a great impact on learners' motivation. Some reasons can be because working in small groups makes learners feel entertaining experiences; it facilitates and supports a good atmosphere within the members of the groups (Namaziandost et al., 2019). Moreover, interaction increases among learners when working in groups. Learners' motivation enhances since they feel less afraid when using the language because of self-confidence that they develop when they study in small groups. Additionally, Marashi and Khatami (2017) explained that the use of CL strategies provides an opportunity to share ideas naturally, which allows the students to create a more comfortable, stimulating and amusing learning environment. For the given reasons, CL strategies seem to definitely have positive effects on learners' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in the classroom since most of the students seem to like the experience when they work with their peers which also helps them to increase their academic and social skills. Finally, students increase their self-confidence; consequently, they are less afraid to use the language in and outside the classroom.

Other findings were also analyzed in the different studies regarding the effects of CL strategies. learners' skills are also enhanced. First, students develop speaking and reading skills while working in groups. In a study conducted by Pan and Wu (2013),

besides enhancing their motivation, students enhanced their reading skills. Also, in Namaziandost et al.'s study (2019), students increased their oral skills. The results of these studies can be explained because of some factors: When teachers employed CL strategies, their students had peer discussions that led them to make extra efforts to accomplish the task. Moreover, they had more opportunities to talk in the groups as they were encouraged to speak, so students became more confident and willing to talk.

Finally, students also improved their social skills and creativity through CL strategies. In Namaziandost et al.'s study (2019), the authors state that when students work in groups their success would benefit their classmates. When students work in groups, they support each other and provide positive interpersonal support. As a result, CL strategies reinforces their relationships as they perform different activities together. Learners also improve their creativity as they work with their classmates; for instance, in regard to the solution of problems, they are able to solve them more easily and quickly than solving the same problems without any kind of peer support.

Students and teachers' perceptions were also analyzed: While learners considered that CL helped them in various aspects, such as helping them to solve activities more quickly, teachers considered that the use of CL strategies can be difficult because it is time-consuming and students' interaction might decrease as they keep working with the same classmates over and over. For teachers it can be difficult to implement these strategies since managing time availability in a correct manner demands rigid discipline. Finally, teachers also perceived that students do not improve their relationships since there is no difference in interaction between CL strategies and traditional methods in EFL classrooms.

The last point to mention in this study is related to benefits and challenges of the use of CL strategies. The first point refers to the benefits found in this research. On the one hand, students enhanced intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and language, social, and

creativity skills. Because interaction and communication improved within the different groups in the classrooms, students felt more confident about their performance, which made them feel enthusiastic toward learning with their classmates. On the other hand, teachers face some challenges while using CL strategies: a) Students' motivation sometimes disappears, b) Limited teachers' knowledge about the application of CL strategies, c) Their application is time-consuming, and d) Conflicts between learners might arise.

Once the results of the application of CL strategies regarding EFL learners' motivation have been analyzed, some recommendations are indicated hereinafter. First, teachers should use a variety of strategies for grouping the students in order to avoid a monotonous atmosphere that might affect learners' satisfaction in the classroom. Second, more research should be conducted in our context regarding motivation and academic skills since there are EFL learners that have difficulties while trying to learn the target language; therefore, the use of CL strategies might be the solution for enhancing students' motivation. Lastly, teachers should use CL strategies more frequently with learners since it seems that they work better in groups than working alone while trying to learn another language.

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