

**Improvement of speaking skill by using Cooperative Learning on EFL Learners**

Improvement of speaking skill by using Cooperative Learning on EFL Learners

Juan Camilo Flórez Bolaños

Submitted to the School of Human Sciences  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for  
the degree of B.A in the Department of  
Linguistics and Languages

Universidad de Nariño

April 2016

Las ideas aportadas en el Trabajo de Grado son responsabilidad exclusiva de los autores, artículo 1° acuerdo # 324 del 11 de octubre de 1966, del Honorable Consejo Directivo de la Universidad de Nariño.

Nota de aceptación:

---

---

---

---

---

Firma del presidente del jurado

---

Firma del jurado

---

Firma del jurado

San Juan de Pasto Abril de 2016

**Table of Contents**

What is cooperative learning?..... 9

Why use cooperative learning for improving speaking ability?.....10

Advantages of CL for creating a good speaking atmosphere.....13

Cooperative learning strategies that involve speaking ability.....15

Didactic proposal.....21

Conclusion.....28

References.....29

To promote learners' ability to use English in a real-world context mainly depends on how teaching and learning methods are implemented. In traditional language classrooms students are taught mostly about language and its general principles. In order to reform traditional teaching approaches, several authors try to carry out Cooperative Learning strategies for teaching and learning English in a more profitable manner. This paper is going to be a useful tool for teachers and students of English as a foreign language, because its mission is to show whether Cooperative Learning can be effective to improve and develop speaking procedures on learners of English as a foreign language.

Learning of English as a foreign language has been intensified last decades, obtaining several accomplishments around the world. Many varieties of English teaching methods and approaches, such as Direct Method, Total Physical Response, Audio-Lingual Method, and Communicative Language Teaching among others, have worked on FLT in different periods of time.

In modern days, English is a lingua franca; it means it is a language which is necessary and used all over the world. Nevertheless, not all of the students who are learning English are able to achieve a good communicative level. Although most learners can dominate a large amount of vocabulary and grammar rules, most of the time they are not able to pronounce or write complete sentences. Those conditions could lead to upsetting situations for English learners. This paper will show an appropriate manner to motivate English students to enhance their language speaking skill by using an avant-garde method known as Cooperative Learning to improve the English teaching and learning process.

### **Objective**

This paper is meant to demonstrate that Cooperative Learning can be used as a contemporary approach to facilitate the learning and teaching of English as a foreign language; through understanding the general definition of this approach and its components we can also find an essential connection between these concepts and the development of the principal objective of this paper. The objective is to explain the cooperative learning strategies that might be useful to improve speaking skills of students of English as a foreign language and to share and analyze different points of view that many authors present about cooperative learning approach, taking into consideration real evidence that some of these authors contemplate.

Key words: Cooperative Learning, EFL Classrooms, Learning Activities

For justify this project it is crucial to clarify what Cooperative Learning is about, and how this approach promotes the creation of proper environments that stimulate speaking abilities on EFL learners. The primary intention of this paper is to present a detailed connotation about Cooperative Learning. Therefore, it is necessary to attain the basis of the main goal of this paper, which is to distinguish Cooperative Learning as a suitable approach to improve speaking ability on EFL students through the analysis of the literature that some excerpts have contemplated on their proper line of research.

Afterwards these experiences will be discussed and contextualized in our real-world setting. English teachers and students are responsible for generating a comparison between our own pragmatic experiences and situations in the classroom and the learning environment these actors are exposed to; then, it is necessary to adapt and examine the advantages that Cooperative Learning provides at the moment of practicing and evolving speaking panoramas EFL students face.

This research paper will be a useful tool for teachers and students of English who are developing EFL classes; a clear designed didactic proposal of how Cooperative Learning particularly helps learners to improve their speaking ability, will be shown to complement of analysis this paper. The didactic proposal has been designed to be carried out in a real-world environment in order to promote speaking in the class.



## Theoretical Framework

### What is cooperative learning?

Cooperative learning is an instructional method whereby students in small groups collaborate to maximize one another's learning. This way, they help each other achieving mutual goals (Johnson, Johnson, & Smith, 1998). In other words, the sense of this approach is to promote team work and to comprehend better common ideas that a topic may involve.

Cooperative Learning is also considered as a fresh theory and approach because its beginning was in America at the middle of 20th century, for that reason we can say it has been widely used and spread. Nowadays, there are too many interpretations for Cooperative learning; here we have an example: Cooperative Learning is defined as a group of learning activities which are organized so that learning depends on the socially structured exchange of information between learners in groups and in which each learner is held accountable for his or her own learning and is motivated to increase the learning of others. (Kagan, 1992).

Currently, many teachers can find some difficulties at the moment of implementing Cooperative Learning as a strategy of teaching because they can consider that group work is hard to control and the results on the learning process of students may be not the ones we expect; but the idea is to take the risk of carrying out new methods despite the negative results; the idea is to make it effective with the practice.

Wang (2004) exposes that nowadays, English teaching in China has many undesirable characteristics that are deriving from traditional instruction. Language teaching in China should change the antiquated practices and move on from traditional practices. The teacher-centered

classroom should be transformed into student-centered classroom, then the teacher should be the guide inside cooperative learning process.

According to Gomleksiz (2007) the effectiveness of cooperative learning has consistently indicated that this methodology promotes higher achievement, more positive interpersonal relationships, and higher self-esteem than competitive or individualistic efforts.

### **Why use cooperative learning for improving speaking ability?**

Due to the necessities of modern life it is important to develop speaking skills during the English learning process because through the acquisition of this ability students can succeed in a society that every day requires personnel who can speak in English because of the need to maintain international connections. Furthermore, managing good spoken English provides the possibility of getting in touch with other countries, learn their customs and consequently enrich our cultural background.

Rahman (2010) states that speaking is the way of communication that humans most frequently use to express their thoughts, establish different opinions to transmit information. This is a proof that students need to speak properly in every daily environment, in order to achieve successful social interactions. But also learners need to achieve a better performance when they must orally express in meetings, interviews, discussions to participate and argue on behalf of their own considerations in class, or make oral presentations about a particular topic. Giving chances to students to practice the target language will be useful to build competent speakers in English-speaking contexts; cooperative learning develops students' social skills.

For instance, Chen tan (2009) points out that during the action of the group work, students are allowed to share and exchange ideas with each other in order to solve the problem in a successfully way. This would be very helpful for students on developing their interpersonal skills. Then, cooperative learning could increase students' motivations to orally reveal all their points of view.

Cooperation is required most when students are working the same task. Furthermore, each member has opportunities to contribute to the group. This contributor would be proud of the group members. Such accomplishment for the whole group would encourage each member to practice cooperative learning and help each member to develop a positive attitude towards language learning (Johnson & Johnson, 1989).

Cooperative learning also helps students on developing their independent proficiency. When a topic is given out by the teacher, all students should display their personal opinions in several manners included spoken word. As a result, each student may be able to generate an input in the group that reflects a comprehensive extent of perspectives. (Wang, Haertel & Walberg, 1998).

Besides, cooperative learning could help students to easily understand impressions; because lots of perceptions and points of view will be shared; students are going to be able to receive different kinds of response or feedback. This means each student can effectively have a more complete perception of the construction of those spoken ideas and opinions or even about topics which are postulated by the teacher, in order to establish communicative competence, which can be expressed in oral practices. In addition, through cooperative learning activities,

students become directors, and tutors of others, supplying them to feel more comfortable because the lessons are coming from their peer's performance.

Maher (2010) evidenced that cooperative activities help in the learning of whole groups with each individual intending to improve his or her own skills. Maher's project was focused on implementing, measuring and examining the effectiveness of using assigned group roles and gender organization like strategies to increase participation in cooperative learning groups. In order to get the results, data was collected using a trilateral approach based on observations and questionnaires. The results from this study showed that when students were organized in their cooperative groups; there was an increase in students' participation. Participation also incremented when teachers assigned roles to their students; participation showed a predisposition of the learners to practice speaking abilities and create oral discussion and interaction, the effectiveness of this study also depends on learners' attitude affecting their performance and enthusiasm to work in groups.

Richards and Rodgers (2001) consider that students are aware and responsible for planning, monitoring and evaluating their own learning having in mind that learning is a process that requires students' direct and active integration of group work and participation in the tasks. On the other hand, Pair grouping is the most typical cooperative learning format, ensuring the use of time with the highest time efficiency for learners engaged on tasks. For example, Pair task in which learners alternate roles, involve partners in the role of instructors, recorders, and some significant information may emerge orally.

Therefore, some roles students play while working in groups include discussing the material learned with their classmates, they help each other to acquire a better comprehension of

the theme proposed. This evidences the importance of mutual support as a synonym of great effort and commitment to obtain a common purpose.

### **Advantages of CL for creating a good speaking atmosphere**

Cooperative learning promotes academic achievement, it is relatively easy to implement, and is not expensive. A better behavior and higher rates of attendance appear as a result of increased liking of school. These are some of the benefits of cooperative learning. Although, much of the research on cooperative learning has been carried out with older students, cooperative learning strategies are effective with younger children in preschool centers and primary classrooms. In addition to the positive outcomes just reviewed, cooperative learning also pushes student motivation, encourages group work, foments social and academic interaction among learners and awards successful group participation. (Lawrence & Harvey, 1988)

Johnson and Johnson's (1985) determine that cooperative learning exposure supplies more upper attainment than do competitive and individualistic practices.

Though the studies previously described, it was possible to establish a personal viewpoint about how students harmonize with some research judgments; they are pleased to be able to share their apprehensions with others. They gain confidence from observing that if their teammates can solve problems, they might also be able to figure them out. Speaking in front of a small group of mates, rather than in front of the whole class, is also less stressful.

Moreover, participants are better able to accept criticism, of course if they can criticize too. Socially, the students' level of tolerance and acceptance of other people's perspectives while

improving a skill (*speaking*) it's no doubt beneficial in real-life situations where English learner also needs to be prepared for cooperation.

Li (2004) expresses that Cooperative Learning helps students feel advantageous at every academic level. In cooperative learning teams, low-achieving students can make contributions for the group and develop a successful experience; additionally, all students can enhance their aptitude by explaining their own thoughts to others. Well-constructed cooperative learning tasks may draw into assertive reciprocity of others and stimulate personal accountability. In a cooperative learning team, assignments could be successfully consummated; on the other hand, students must also exhibit interpersonal skills needed for the group to accomplish the postulated task.

Jolliffe (2007) indicates that children's motivation in elementary school depends on the extent to which their basic psychological needs are met. Cooperative learning increases student motivation by providing peer support.

Thus, it is possible to infer that as a part of a learning team, students can achieve success by working with others. Students are also encouraged to learn materials in higher depth than they might otherwise have done, and to think in creative ways to convince the teacher that they have understood the required material.

In summary, cooperative learning appears to be a successful method by which teachers can simultaneously achieve academic and socio-moral objectives. Through the fact that CL approach can create profitable backgrounds that enable students to succeed academically and improve their interpersonal relationships, focus on communicative skills, help other students

perform better in oral communication. All of this because they feel more confident working in small groups while at the same time they reinforce their knowledge and their self-confidence.

### **Cooperative learning strategies that involve speaking ability**

Prieto (2007) suggests different Cooperative learning strategies such as, Jigsaw, Think-Pair-Share, Round Robin and Brainstorming are linked with speaking activities of performance, and creative or free tasks like, questionnaires, information gap, dialogues, roleplays and simulations. She leaded a research project developed in a military school in Bogotá called *La Patria* high school, the purpose of the investigation was to demonstrate that implementing the previously discussed CL's strategies, EFL students improve substantially their oral communicative performance and production consolidating their speaking abilities. Creating an environment in which anxiety and pressure were set aside by giving the students opportunities to express in a free way in which they can be teachers and learners at the same time. To collect data, Prieto used the following instruments: student and teacher surveys, student interviews, field notes and audiotapes recorded during the application of the lessons. The results were very positive; she found that learners had lost the fear to speaking in front of the class or of expressing their thoughts freely. That lack of comfort and confidence would disappear later. Realizing that working in group stimulates fearlessness and communicative environment, students also expressed in their dairies that they have changed their perspective towards working in groups and discovered that interaction between their close friends in classroom is not enough and that they needed to be in touch with all their classmates. This was a positive consequence. Oral improvements gave students the chance to support and comprehend others better; they perceived

that interaction is a useful tool for getting past the fear of committing mistakes at the moment of speaking in English.

Prieto noticed that her students attained a certain level of knowledge and proficiency in language use. But the most important point was that they could express themselves and communicate orally without the pressure of grades or of other students' opinions. The pedagogical repercussions of this research are significant on different levels: students, teachers, school, and even national educational policies. Students discovered that speaking is fun and easy when it involves working with others, and practiced values such as respect, tolerance, team spirit, and the importance of interacting with others. Students also established new relationships with their classmates through cooperative learning. Teachers found different strategies through cooperative learning for helping students to improve their oral production. Those cooperative strategies could be taken up by schools as tools to help the bilingualism process. This experience, at the same time, helped teachers to encourage their students into oral production, giving a real purpose for speaking and using other communicative skills as input. These activities created a different class environment. That environment was free of anxiety and pressure; students were free to express themselves. Finally it is important to mention some issues concerning the school where this project was developed: the school is going to begin a bilingualism process and, as such, it is very important to identify and apply strategies that could bring about a more homogeneous population using the current heterogeneous one, to achieve the desired level; the school is also adopting the new demands of the *Colombia Bilingual Program* from the ministry of national education, and so it is very important to adopt strategies that help the institution face and fulfill those demands.



In brief, after the application and analysis of the previous instruments it was evidenced that students improved their perception about the group work and, therefore they improved their speaking skills thanks to the fact that through this type of strategies the learners had the opportunity to help and to learn from their classmates.

**Jigsaw:** Groups with five students are set up. Each member is assigned some material to learn and to teach to his or her group members. The representative of the students who is also working on the same topic gets together the group and discusses the relevant concepts and the ways to teach them to the whole class. After practicing in these “expert” groups the original groups get together and teach each other. Tests and assessments can come next. (Wood, 1987)

**Think-Pair-Share:** This is a simple and quick technique; the instructor develops and poses questions and gives the students a few minutes to think about a response, then he asks students to share their ideas with a partner. This task gives them the opportunity to collect and organize their thoughts. “Pair” and “share” components encourage learners to compare and contrast their understanding of each other and to rehearse their response first in a low-risk situation before going public with the whole class. (Sharan, 1994)

**Three-Step Interview:** Each member of a team chooses another member to be a partner. Firstly, individuals interview their partner by asking clarifying questions. Secondly, step partners exchange roles in final step members share their partner’s response with the team. (Kagan, 2001)

**Round Robin:** It is primarily a brainstorming technique in which students generate ideas but do not elaborate, explain, evaluate, or question the ideas. Group

members take turns at responding to a question with words, phrases, or short answers. The order of responses is organized by proceeding from one student to another, until all students have had an opportunity to speak. This technique helps in generating many ideas because all students participate and because it discourages comments that interrupt or inhibit the flow of ideas. The ideas could be used to develop a good paragraph on a given topic. (Kagan, 2001)

**Talking Chips:** In talking chips, students participate in a group discussion, surrendering a token each time they speak. This technique ensures equitable participation by regulating how often each group member is allowed to participate. This technique encourages reticent students to participate and solve communication or process problems, such as dominating or clashing group members. (Mandal, 2009)

**Praise-Question-Polish:** This technique is focused on that group members take turns to read out loud their papers as the other group members follow along with copies.

First, the defendants are asked to react to the piece of writing by asking them to identify what they liked about the work (Praise), then identify what portion of the writing they did not understand (Question), finally offering specific suggestions for improvement of the writing (Polish). The students would be able to improve their own writing by critically evaluating the writing of their peers. (Mandal, 2009)

Tsailing (2002) evidenced in her field work two main points; the first one reveals the existence of a close relation between cooperative learning and the communicative language teaching and the second recommends guidelines for EFL teachers who want to employ the following strategies based on cooperative learning: *Three-step-interview, learning together, talk pair, inside-outside circle, and student-teams-achievement division* to improve students'

communicative competence. The author developed an experimental research in a rural town of Taiwan; 70 students of first year junior school were involved; a pretest-posttest group research design was used, the experimental group was taught in cooperative learning for one semester with the methods previously mentioned. The control group was taught in the traditional method of grammar translation with some of the audio-lingual approach. This study collected data from two oral tasks; scores were collected by monthly examinations, motivational questionnaires, student interview, and teacher interview to achieve methodological triangulation. Statistical tools of the independent sample test and paired sample test were used to define whether there were significant inter- and intra-group differences. The outcomes of the study showed that the experimental group outperformed the control group significantly in the measurement of oral communicative competence and the motivational questionnaire. The results of the students' scores on the school monthly examination presented that the academic achievements of the experimental group were comparable to those of the control group.

The major findings of this study suggested that cooperative learning helped considerably to enhance the junior high school learners' oral communicative competence and their motivation toward learning English. Moreover, what the author find more suitable was that CL is a practicable real-world teaching method that puts communicative approach into action. Such a student-centered teaching method helps improve the students' oral communicative competences of the target language, which includes the linguistic, discourse, strategic, and non-verbal competency because cooperative learning creates a friendlier and supportive learning environment within which students have more opportunities and enjoy more freedom to explore and practice the target language.

Cooperative learning creates natural, interactive contexts in which students have authentic reasons for listening to one another, asking questions, clarifying issues, and re-stating points of view. Such frequent interaction among the learners, in turn, increases the amount of student talk and student participation in the classroom.

In brief, Cooperative learning strategies may be difficult to practice as innovative tactics of instruction; using them to teach would be interesting for the teacher and the students. The students may be able to work with classmates and asking each other for support will improve their attitudes towards speaking. At the same time learners will show a considerable level of keenness, interest and immersion on being taught through cooperative learning assignments. Consequently, an integration of these tasks will be a considerable advantage to the students group and help them improve their speaking skills.

From the perspective of Smith, Cudaback, Goddard, and Myers-Walls (1994), EFL learners can improve their English proficiency through innumerable learning skills and strategies. For example, through asking questions in Cooperative Learning group discussions, EFL students can participate actively in the classroom and exercise their language communicative skills. In addition, teachers should encourage learners to speak more and receive feedback to help them acquire competence in English proficiency.

Smith et al. (1994) note that oral communication can help students clarify and enhance their understanding of innumerable concepts; thus, through working or developing games with their peers in CL groups, EFL students can play a part in interactions and consequently increase their oral language development largely.

In short, with cooperative learning method, students are given the chance to speak and analyze it in a deeper way in order to construct a valid and complete input. Peer review helps students refine their knowledge regarding speaking structure and vocabulary use. In order to assess well someone else's input, students have to show and support their explanations. It also benefits the students because they have the chance of assessing his or her particular work. They exhibit more confidence in speaking and their fears towards speaking decline.

Olivares (1993) says that students in CL groups can practice buying groceries from a supermarket catalog, expressing an opinion about hot news in a newspaper, and ordering food from a restaurant menu. These materials are employed to help bring content to life and supplement instructional materials. Therefore, teachers who integrate real world materials into CL groups can create more opportunities for EFL students to practice real-world oral communication in their lives.

### **Didactic proposal**

In order to promote an authentic environment, EFL teachers can use real world materials, such as radio, TV, Internet, newspapers, magazines, advertisement brochures, catalogs, or menus that can be integrated into CL groups to allow for real-life communications. In addition, teachers need to know students' interests and learning styles and design curriculums to meet students' learning needs. They also need to motivate students to speak the target language anytime inside and outside the classroom to practice accuracy and fluency. Tucker points out that it is essential for EFL teachers to correct students' oral errors directly in order to improve EFL students' oral communication (Tucker, 1993).

I personally believe, that one of the main aspects that we as teachers have to take into consideration before encouraging our students to speak in the target language, is the fact that learners need to know the importance of language and put it in practice during speaking activities; otherwise it could be a negative experience for students because they would not have appropriate tools to perform an oral communication causing them problems such as lack of self-confidence and consequently creating prejudices that will not allow them to feel comfortable the next time they attempt an oral activity.

To avoid some frustration in students who develop oral activities, it is important to provide them with specific grammatical structure like the verb to be, simple present, present continuous, past simple and the use of adjectives. Students will be able to participate actively in a conversation practicing vocabulary and pronunciation as learners talk and exchange personal information, describe characters, actions in progress, and past actions while feeling secure at the moment of expressing ideas, asking questions, participating in conversations, etc.

Keatley C. and Kennedy D. (1998) point out that the main objective of teaching speaking skills is achieving a successful and effective communication level in which students are able to autonomously understand some information and perform their speaking abilities in the best possible way. For this reason, it is necessary that we as teachers stimulate our students' confidence, making them aware of the fact that they can achieve effective interaction with others.

Tucker (1993) remarks that paraphrasing and retelling a story is another effective technique in enhancing students' oral skills

Taking into account these aspects:

- Encourage students to speak clearly
- Encourage students to talk with teacher and one another
- Encourage students to speak loudly enough

### **English- II- Program (4 weeks) –Alberto Quijano V. High School**

This proposal is addressed for teenagers who are coursing 9° of High School, the plan has been designed for being developed in 4 four weeks.

**Justification.** Students will face their fears of talking in public and of expressing their opinions and points of view to others. For that they must comprehend that interaction will make them sociable people who love building new relationships. Cooperative Learning will be a method for consolidating learners' group work; it will increase students' ability to communicate with each other in their groups while looking for a common accomplishment and to share ideas with the rest of the class and the teacher. At the same time, there will be no trace of English speaking fear that learners could have experienced at the beginning.

**Objectives.** At the end of the course learners must have left behind all kind of fears for expressing opinions and points of view loudly and in front other people, they have to be more sociable people and showing they can interact in English with the teacher and their classmates, the self confidence level must increase in a noteworthy way. Students will be able to understand the importance of teamwork for reaching a purpose.

**Methodology.** Cooperative Learning will be the approach to be used in this course in order to improving group work and focus on the interaction among the students fomenting oral

production like exposing short ideas. *Think-pair-share approach* is going to be an advantageous strategy because students think through questions using three distinct steps, encouraging individual participation. This is an excellent method for promoting and articulating communication in the classroom. Another CL technique for putting in practice is *Team Jigsaw* which deals with assigning each student in a team one fourth of a page to read from any text (for example, a social studies text), or one fourth of a topic to investigate or memorize. Each student completes his or her assignment and then teaches the others or helps to put together a team product by contributing a piece of the puzzle, that exposition of their opinions and hypothesis of the developed topic which must be certainly shared in an oral way.

*Think-Aloud Pair Problem Solving* is another CL strategy to increase discussion levels using speaking more than others skills. This learning activity involves solving problems; students work in pairs and alternate roles. For each problem one is the solver while the other is the listener. *Roundtable* is a CL streak where each team member provides one opinion to the rest of the class; it could be effective for creating a debate setting. The procedures for successfully carrying the course are:

- The teacher presents initial material as appropriate, using CL as the main approach of learning and for practicing speaking skill.
- The teacher develops expectations for group learning and makes sure students understand the purpose of the learning that will take place.
- The classroom is arranged to facilitate group interaction.
- The content to be taught is identified, and the teacher determines criteria for developed it.



- The teacher monitors student interaction in the groups, and provides assistance and clarification as needed. The teacher reviews group skills and facilitates problem solving when necessary.

Well-constructed cooperative learning tasks involve positive interdependence on others and individual accountability. To work successfully in a cooperative learning team, however, students must also master interpersonal skills needed for the group to accomplish its tasks.

**Evaluation.** (Johnson & Johnson, 1999) recommend judging the effectiveness of the applied cooperative learning method; EFL students' performance should be assessed. Defining assessment as "*to judge the quality and quantity of learning and award grades*". Assessment helps to achieve the following purposes:

- Diagnosing students' present level of knowledge and skills.
- Monitoring students' progress toward learning goals to help form the instructional program.
- Providing data to judge the final level of students' learning.

**Individual, Self-Assessment.** Students can develop a better understanding of their learning process, a metacognitive perspective which enhances future learning, through active reflection on their achievements. Student outcomes are evaluated. They must individually demonstrate dominance of important skills or concepts of the learning. Evaluation is based on observations of student performance or oral responses to questions. Such assessments also speaking skills as students demonstrate their knowledge of the developed in class topic, problem solving capacity, and contributions to group processing.

*Peers.* Allowing the opportunity for group members to assess the work of their peers provides important feedback on the relative merits of contributions and promotes cooperation as students realize their accountability to the group. A word of caution is appropriate, however, as the peer review process is complex, it relies on well-defined criteria and evidence-building that is clearly understood by all participants.

| <i>Evaluation Procedure</i>   |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Peer Work:</i> Report actions that are happening now.<br/>Grammar use: Present progressive tense. <b>20%</b></li> </ul>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Group Work:</i> How often do you do it? Grammar use: Adverbs of frequency. <b>20%</b></li> </ul>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Groups' Debate:</i> Do you think religion is changing the world?<br/>The more you talk the better. <b>30%</b></li> </ul>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Group Exposition (to be done in pairs):</i> Talking about countries where English is the first language, their customs and general characteristics. <b>20%</b></li> </ul> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Self-Assessment:</i> Your performance during the course activities. <b>10%</b></li> </ul>   |

| <i>Course</i>  |   |
|--|---|
| <i>Contents</i>  |   |
| <b>WEEK</b>  | <b>TECHNIQUE FOR TASK</b>               |
| <b>1.</b> Exposing current actions.<br><br>(Present progressive tense)                                       | <i>Think-Aloud Pair Problem Solving</i> |
| <b>2.</b> How often do you go to cinema?<br><br>(Simple present tense)<br><br>(Frequency Adverbs)            | <i>Team Jigsaw</i>                      |
| <b>3.</b> Religion Nowadays<br><br>(Enrolling to debate)   | <i>Roundtable</i>                       |
| <b>4.</b> Being familiar with all countries<br>that has English as native language.<br><br>(English culture) | <i>Think-pair-share approach</i>        |

### **Conclusion**

Cooperative learning method certainly evidences some positive outcomes at the moment of implementing it as a strategy to reinforce speaking ability, oral production and communication of EFL classrooms. CL looks for the active participation of group members to reach a common objective proposed in a particular task. Discussion and speaking competence for sharing several ideas will contribute to administer the task's objective. CL establishes an oral interaction between students and teachers; it also is a very helpful approach because it deals with the doubts and fears of rally expressing ideas that some EFL learners can face. Consequently, CL provides confidence in learners and their peers. This work seeks to consolidate the idea that teamwork is great when there is a search for the same goal, the path will be shorter and oral interaction in activities based on real life will make the student a person capable of communicating without reproach.

For the Colombian context it is important to implement cooperative learning in our classrooms to encourage the participation of the students in spoken foreign language. English is learned by establishing communication links in all skills, but speech is so fundamental to student interaction with the world. Currently, Colombia wants to emerge as a modern country and seeks to make English its second language. Thus, as teachers we must implement CL to strengthen speech. Oral proficiency on EFL will be a very valuable asset and a very successful strategy to help students overcome their fear of orally express ideas, views, opinions, criticisms and feelings. No matter if there are some errors, teacher and CL methods will lead students to a profitable purpose.

### References

- Chen. (2009). *Cooperative Learning and Oral Expression Competency for Chinese Students of English*. Retrieved from: <http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1793/34688>
- Gomleksiz, M. N. (2007). *Effectiveness of cooperative learning (jigsaw II) method on teaching English as a foreign language to engineering students (Case of Firat University, Turkey)*. European Journal of Engineering Education.
- Johnson, D.W. & Johnson, R.T. (1985). *The internal dynamics of cooperative learning groups*. Learning to cooperate, cooperating to learn. New York.
- Johnson, D.W., & Johnson, R. (1989). *Cooperation and competition: Theory and research*. Edina, MN: Interaction Book Co.
- Johnson, D. W., Johnson, R. T., & Smith, K. A. (1998). *Cooperative learning returns to college: What evidence is there that it works?* Change, 30(4), 26-35.
- Johnson, D.W., Johnson, R.T., and Smith, K.A. ( 1998). *Maximizing instruction through cooperative learning*. ASEE Prism, 7(6), 24-29.
- Jolliffe, W. (2007). *Cooperative learning in the classroom: putting it into practice*. London: Paul Chapman.
- Kagan, S. (1992). *Cooperative learning*. San Juan Capistrano, CA: Resources for Teachers, Inc.
- Kagan, S. (2001). *Kagan Structures are Brain-Based*. San Clemente, CA: Kagan Publishing
- Keatley, Catherine & Kennedy, Deborah. (1998). *The essentials of language teaching*. The National Capital Language Resource Center Washington DC.

- Lawrence & Harvey. (1988) *Cooperative Learning Strategies and Children*. Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education Urbana IL.
- Li, W. (2004). *The Application of Cooperative Learning in Spoken English Teaching*. Journal of Southwest University of Science and Technology.
- Maher L. (2010). *Strategies to Increase Participation in Cooperative Learning Groups*. (Thesis of Masters in Teaching). Marygrove College. Detroit. USA.
- Mandal, R. (2009). *Cooperative learning strategies to enhance writing skill*. The Modern Journal of the Applied Linguistics.
- Olivares, R. A. (1993). *Using the newspaper to teach ESL learners*. Newark: From: International Reading Association.
- Prieto Castillo C. (2007). *Improving Eleventh Graders' Oral Production in English Class through Cooperative Learning Strategies*. (Degree research project). Universidad Nacional, Bogota. Colombia.
- Rahman Mojibur, M. (2010) *Teaching Oral Communication Skills: A Task-based Approach*. (Research project of assistant professor) Indian School of Mines University, Dhanbad.
- Richards & Rodgers (2001). *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*. Cambridge Language Teaching Library. Cambridge. UK.
- Sharan, S. (1994). *Handbook of Cooperative Learning Methods*. West Port, CT: Greenwood Press.
- Smith, C. A., Cudaback, D., Goddard, H. W., & Myers-Walls, J. A. (1994). *National Extension Parent Education Model*. Manhattan, KS: Kansas Cooperative Extension System.
- Tsailing Lian. (2002). *Implementing cooperative learning in EFL teaching: process and effects*. (Thesis for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy). Normal University. Taiwan.

- Tucker, G. R. (1993). *Policy and practice in the education of culturally and linguistically diverse students*. Alexandria, VA: Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages.
- Wang, M.C., Haertel, G.D., & Walberg, H.J. (1998). *Educational resilience* (Laboratory for Student Success Publication Series No. 11). Philadelphia: Temple University Center for Research in Human Development and Education.
- Wang, X. (2004). *Psychological barrier of English oral communication and teaching strategy*. Journal of Guangdong AIB Polytechnic College. 01.76-80.
- Wood, Karen. (1987) *Fostering Cooperative Learning in Middle and Secondary Level Classrooms*." Journal of Reading.