

# ENGLISH INSTRUCTIONAL INNOVATION FOR LISTENING AND SPEAKING SKILLS THROUGH COLLABORATIVE LEARNING APPROACH<sup>\*</sup>

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## Abstract

English instructional innovation for listening and speaking skills can be effectively enhanced through a collaborative learning approach. The collaborative learning approach promotes active student engagement, interaction, and cooperation, allowing learners to develop their listening and speaking abilities in a supportive and interactive environment. Key elements of this approach include group discussions, pair work and role-playing, peer feedback, collaborative projects, language exchanges, and multimedia presentations. By assigning them to research, plan, and present information orally, they can practice both listening and speaking skills while working together towards a common goal, resulting in actively engaging with the language, learning from each other, and developing their confidence and fluency required for effective English communication.

**Keywords :** English Instructional Innovation, Listening Skills, Speaking Skills, Collaborative Learning Approach, CLA

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## Introduction

The human beings constantly expound on existing knowledge or learn new things. Sometimes, when they are not learning, they may apply their knowledge or skills even if it is merely solving a logical puzzle in order to exercise their minds. Learning a language is different from acquiring a language. In this context, Krashen (2003) says, “Acquiring language is an unconscious process, whereas learning a second language is a conscious one”. It is absolutely correct that children acquire their mother tongue right from birth and on the other hand, they learn their second language once they get some command over the other subjects. The learners should learn the structure as well as its use in real situations while learning a foreign or second language. For example, a native Spanish learner who wants to learn English will put adjectives after nouns and he should have to do the reverse while he learns English. Learning environment plays a significant role in English language learning. As the learners are from various backgrounds and even the small things taken in the classrooms can significantly affect them while learning a new language in a different culture, teachers have to create a friendly learning environment to encourage their motivation and enhance their focus on learning in a joyful, pleasant, and congenial atmosphere. Furthermore, the main responsibility of English teachers is to motivate the learners towards the subjects by applying different learning strategies; implementing various novel techniques and approaches to English language instruction is essential. The language skills of the ELLs will be improved when they allot more time to learn new things and give a regular practice to what they have learned in the classroom. ELLs frequently use English language not only to convey concepts or ideas but also to contribute to structured activities that promote group or learner-to-learner interactions. Here, the English language teachers can estimate how much the learners have learned and how much progress they have achieved in learning English (Kember, D., & Kwan, K. P., 2000).

The number of ELLs has been increased by leaps and bounds every year. In America, for instance, the number of ELLs has risen significantly in the last ten years. According to the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition, more than one-half of states have experienced a growth rate of over 100% in their ELLs numbers. It is crystal clear that this increase is both in the United States and all over the world. In most of the situations, effective learning takes place when the learners learn by working together. Collaborative learning happens when a group of two or more learners work together to collaborate on a task, discuss a point, or complete an activity. This type of intended consequence of accomplishing tasks together is to help learners learn the complexities of finding solution to a problem and promote deeper learning through doing. Group work helps them to learn the course material better and provides them with opportunities to develop some additional skills. During group work, learners have to divide the given large project into small tasks, manage time, harness group members' strengths, cooperate, address group learning needs, resolve conflicts, and reach consensus. These skills are very useful for them not only in their collaborative workspaces but also in their future careers. To achieve specific learning outcomes, effective group work should be structured carefully. The group work must have certain learning outcomes such as instructor continuous support throughout the task, formation of clear learning outcomes and learner expectations, and well-written directions.

Listening and speaking are very important things in English: they cannot be ruled out or ignored. Therefore, in addition to mastering tenses, reading, and writing, practicing listening and writing skills are also required. Indeed, there are several factors that make listening and speaking less desirable such as listening difficulties and technology that facilitates listening and speaking. However, there is an easier way to learn English language, for example, listening to English songs or watching English movies. It is evident that developing listening and speaking habits is vital for learners since practice makes perfect.-Rintaningrum, R., 2018, pp.112-120).

## Speaking Skills

Speaking is generally thought to be the most important of the four skills. Indeed, one frustration commonly voiced by learners is that they have spent years studying English, but still, they cannot speak it. There are some language policies, which provide a way to specify what learners are able to do at certain levels with regard to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), the portfolio, or inside the curriculum. Teachers should follow them as a way of providing a guideline for their lessons. According to Bueno, Madrid, and McLaren (2006, pp.321), speaking is one of the most difficult skills language learners have to face. Despite this, it has traditionally been forced into the background while English language teachers have spent all our classroom time trying to teach students writing, reading, and sometimes even listening in a second language (L2) because grammar has a long-written tradition.

The most difficult aspect of spoken English is that it is always accomplished via interaction with at least one other speaker. This is one of the reasons many learners were shocked and disappointed when they used their second or foreign language for the first time in real interaction. They had not been prepared for spontaneous communication and could not cope with all of its simultaneous demands. Speaking is an activity requiring the integration of many subsystems. All these factors combine to make speaking a second or foreign language a formidable task for language learners. However, many people consider speaking to be the central skill (Bailey and Savage, 1994, pp. 6-7).

## Listening Skills

Listening is the skill of understanding spoken language (Lindsay and Knight, 2006, p.45) Listening is an essential skill, present in most of the activities we carry out throughout our lives. According to Nunan (2001, p.23) listening is a six-staged process, consisting of hearing, attending, understanding, remembering,

evaluating, and responding. These stages occur in sequence and rapid succession.

*Hearing:* Hearing has to do with the response caused by sound waves stimulating the sensory receptors of the ear; it is the perception of sound, not necessarily paying attention. Listeners must hear to listen, but they do not listen to hear.

*Attention:* It refers to a selection that the brain focuses on. The brain screens stimuli and permits only a select few to come into focus.

*Understanding:* It consists of analyzing the meaning of what listeners have heard and understanding symbols they have seen and heard. Listeners must analyze the stimuli they have perceived. Symbolic stimuli are not only words; they can be sounds, like applause, or even sights, like a blue uniform that have symbolic meanings as well. To do this, listeners have to stay in the right context and understand the intended meaning. The meaning attached to these symbols is a function of listeners' past associations and of the context in which symbols occur. For successful interpersonal communication, they must understand the intended meaning and the context assumed by the sender. After following the next stage, it is necessary to remark: as mentioned previously, the background knowledge is important and people have to take into account several points: general factual information, local factual information, socio-cultural knowledge, and knowledge of context. With these factors, the information will be correctly received.

*Remembering:* It is an important Listening process because it means that an individual, in addition to receiving and interpreting the message, listeners have also added it to the mind's storage bank, meaning that the information will be remembered. However, their attention is selective, so too is their memory; what is remembered may be quite different from what was originally heard or seen.

*Evaluating:* In the penultimate stage, listeners evaluate the message that has been received. It is at this point when active listeners weigh evidence, sort fact from opinion and determine the presence or absence of bias or prejudice

in a message. The effective listener makes sure that he or she does not begin this activity too soon, as beginning this stage of the process before a message is completed results in no longer hearing and attending to the incoming message and, as a result, the listening process ceases.

*Responding:* It is the final stage in which, according to the response, the speaker checks if the message has been received correctly. This stage requires that the receiver complete the process through verbal or non-verbal feedback because the speaker has no other way to determine if a message has been received. Therefore, it is sometimes complicated as they do not have the opportunity to go back and check comprehension (Nunan: 2001, p.23).

## **Collaborative Learning Approach**

A collaborative learning approach may provide a bridge to promote participation, cooperation, and responsibility in an active dialog to complete the purposes of the learning. According to Shagrir. L. (2017) collaborative learning in the EFL class has some advantages. Firstly, it enables students to have more language practice opportunities. Di Nitto (2000) supports the idea by claiming that one leading cause of low achievement of learners in studying a foreign language is insufficient time for their language practice. Therefore, collaborative learning can be one of the alternatives to solve the problem. By dividing the class into small groups, there will be more time can be allotted, and more chances of conversation can be performed. Secondly, collaborative learning can improve the quality of learners' talk. Zhang (2010) states that collaborative learning can be implemented to produce a social setting that imitates real-life situations in the way language is used. This will promote students to construct both the quantity and the quality of speech through requesting, clarifying, and negotiating dialogue during collaborative learning activities. As a result, students produce speech more precisely and use proper language. Thirdly, collaborative learning promotes the creation of positive learning atmosphere. Traditionally, the competitive arrangement in the EFL classroom makes students apprehensive of making mistakes. This unsupportive environment drives

students to feel anxious and stressed. Conversely, collaborative learning is suggested to be implemented to make students feel more comfortable and create a positive affective climate.

Another advantage of collaborative learning is promoting social interaction among learners. Brown (2004) claims that the best way to learn to interact is through interaction itself. It implies that collaborative learning psychologically facilitates students to communicate with their partners in a relaxed and safe atmosphere. Finally, collaborative learning is essential to allow students to have more critical thinking (Maesin et al., 2009). It is called so because, in collaborative learning, there is a problem-solving process that trains students to express their critical thinking on a certain difficulty. Therefore, students in a group can bring innovative ideas creatively to solve the problem given.

## **English Instructional Innovation**

English instructional innovation refers to the use of new and creative teaching methods and strategies to enhance the learning experience of students studying English as a second language. Examples of English instructional innovation are as follows:

1. Interactive technologies: And Interactive technologies refer to tools and digital platforms that allow users to interact with educational content in an engaging and interactive way. The use of interactive technologies, such as online learning platforms, educational apps, software, digital tools, virtual and augmented reality, and gamification elements can engage students in the learning process and make it more fun and interactive. The goal of using interactive technologies in education is to enhance learning experience and provide students with a more engaging and personalized way to learn. By using interactive technologies, students can actively engage with the material they are learning, practice their skills in a more authentic way, and receive immediate feedback on their progress (Renslow, S., 2015).

2. Project-based learning: Project-based learning (PBL) is an instructional approach that emphasizes learning through hands-on projects or activities. It is often used in the classroom to promote critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaboration skills, as well as to engage students in their learning. PBL typically involves several stages, including planning, research, problem-solving, and presentation of the final product. It encourages students to work on projects that are relevant to their interests and goals and help them develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills, as well as their language skills. In PBL, students are given a problem or challenge to solve, and they work collaboratively to develop a solution or product. By working on real-world projects, students are able to see the practical applications of what they are learning, and they are able to connect their learning to real-life situations. PBL can be used in a variety of subjects, including English language arts, where students might work on projects such as creating a podcast, writing a screenplay, or producing a short film. PBL can also be adapted to fit different learning styles and abilities, allowing all students to be actively engaged in their learning.

3. Collaborative learning: And Collaborative learning is an instructional approach that emphasizes student interaction and collaboration to achieve a common goal. It can help students to develop their communication skills, build confidence, and learn from their peers. Collaborative learning can take many forms, including group projects, discussions, debates, and peer review activities. In collaborative learning, students work together in small groups to solve problems, complete assignments, or discuss and reflect on course material. By working together, students can learn from one another, share ideas and perspectives, and develop important communication and teamwork skills. Collaborative learning has several benefits for students. It encourages active participation and engagement, promotes critical thinking and problem-solving, and fosters a sense of community and shared responsibility for learning (Nutreutai Arunsirot, 2021, pp.13-28). Additionally, it can help students develop important social and emotional skills, such as empathy, perspective-taking, and respect for others' ideas and opinions. Collaborative learning can be used in a

variety of settings, from traditional classroom environments to online learning platforms. Teachers can incorporate collaborative learning into their instructional design by structuring activities and assignments that encourage students to work together, providing clear expectations and guidelines for collaboration, and fostering a supportive and inclusive learning environment.

4. Task-based learning: Task-based learning is an instructional approach that emphasizes the completion of meaningful tasks as the primary way to promote language learning. This approach usually focuses on developing communication skills and ability to use language in real-life situations. It can help students to develop their language skills in a more practical and authentic way. In task-based learning, students work collaboratively to complete a specific task or assignment that requires them to use their language skills in real-world situations such as planning a trip, ordering food in a restaurant, or making a presentation. By working on meaningful tasks, they are able to develop a deeper understanding of the language they are learning, as well as the cultural context in which it is used. Task-based learning involves several stages, including pre-task planning, task cycle, and language focus. In the pre-task planning stage, teachers provide students with a clear goal for the task and help them prepare for the task by activating their prior knowledge and providing necessary language input. During the task cycle stage, students work collaboratively to complete the task, using language as a tool to accomplish it. Finally, in the language focus stage, teachers provide feedback on students' language use and focus on specific language points that students need to improve.

5. Flipped classroom: Flipped classroom is a pedagogical model in which traditional classroom activities, like lectures and direct instruction, are moved outside of the classroom, and homework or self-directed learning activities are moved into the classroom. Its goal is to make better use of class time by shifting the focus from passive learning to more active and engaged learning. In a flipped classroom, students learn basic concepts and skills outside of class time through pre-recorded lectures such as videos, readings, or other online

resources and then spend class time working on activities and projects that reinforce their learning, such as discussions, problem-solving, and group projects (Rattanawong, N., Sunanta, P., & Kaewphaitoon, S., 2023, pp.1-9) This allows students more control and ownership over their learning, as well as engage more deeply with the material. Teachers become facilitators of learning, providing guidance and support to students as they work through activities and projects in the flipped classroom. Flipped classroom can be used in a variety of educational settings, from K-12 classrooms to higher education and adult education. Teachers can incorporate the flipped classroom model into their instructional design by creating or curating high-quality instructional videos and resources, providing clear guidelines and expectations for self-directed learning, and creating meaningful and engaging in-class activities that build on students' prior learning.

English instructional innovation is a constantly evolving field that involves the development and implementation of new approaches, methods, and technologies to promote effective and engaging language learning. Some key innovations in English language teaching include the use of interactive technologies, project-based learning, collaborative learning, and task-based learning. Interactive technologies, such as online learning platforms, digital games, and virtual reality, can help to make language learning more engaging, immersive, and personalized. Project-based learning, which involves the completion of real-world tasks and projects, can help students to develop communication skills and to apply language in meaningful contexts. Collaborative learning, which emphasizes student interaction and collaboration, can promote critical thinking, problem-solving, and teamwork skills. Task-based learning, which focuses on the completion of meaningful tasks, can help students develop communication skills and use language in real-life situations. Overall, English instructional innovation is an exciting and rapidly developing field that offers many opportunities for teachers and learners to explore new approaches and technologies, resulting in the enhancement of language learning outcomes. By incorporating innovative approaches into their teaching

practice, teachers can help to create engaging and effective learning experiences that meet the needs and interests of diverse learners.

## **English Instructional Innovation for Listening and Speaking Skills**

English instructional innovations that can help develop students' listening and speaking skills are as follows:

*Podcasts:* Listening to English language podcasts can help students to improve their listening skills, as well as provide them with examples of natural and authentic English language use. Teachers can assign relevant podcasts for students to listen to and discuss in class.

*Speech recognition software:* Speech recognition software can help students practice their speaking skills by analyzing and providing feedback on their pronunciation, intonation, and overall speech clarity. Teachers can assign speaking tasks for students to record and analyze using speech recognition software.

*Role-play and simulation activities:* Role-play and simulation activities can provide students with opportunities to practice their listening and speaking skills in real-world contexts (Khancome C. & Sunanta P., 2023, pp.48-58). For example, students can role-play a job interview or a customer service interaction. This allows students to practice using English in situations they may encounter in the future.

*Digital storytelling:* Digital storytelling can help students develop their speaking skills by encouraging them to create and share stories or presentations in English. Teachers can provide tools and resources for students to create digital stories, such as online video editing software.

*Collaborative learning:* Collaborative learning activities can provide students with opportunities to practice their listening and speaking skills in a group setting. For example, group discussions, debates, and group projects can help students improve their communication skills and build confidence in speaking English. These English instructional innovations can help students

develop their listening and speaking skills in a fun, engaging, and effective way. Teachers can incorporate these activities and resources into their lessons to provide students with a well-rounded language learning experience.

In conclusion, English instructional innovation for listening and speaking skills is an important area of language teaching that involves the development and implementation of new approaches, methods, and technologies to promote effective and engaging language learning. The use of interactive technologies, project-based learning, collaborative learning, and task-based learning can be particularly effective in enhancing listening and speaking skills. Interactive technologies such as audio and video recordings, speech recognition software, and online learning platforms can provide students with authentic listening and speaking practice, as well as immediate feedback on their performance. Project-based learning can help students develop communication skills and apply language in meaningful contexts, while collaborative learning can promote critical thinking, problem-solving, and teamwork skills. Task-based learning can provide students with opportunities to use language in real-life situations, and to develop their communication skills through meaningful tasks. By incorporating innovative approaches into their teaching practice, teachers can help to create engaging and effective learning experiences that meet the needs and interests of diverse learners (Zhang, Y., 2010). Furthermore, teachers can help students achieve greater fluency, accuracy, and confidence in using the English language for a range of communicative purposes by emphasizing the development of listening and speaking skills.

### Conclusion

English instructional innovation for listening and speaking skills through collaborative learning approach is an effective approach to developing listening and speaking skills that can be integrated into a variety of activities. The first is group discussions that encourage students to actively listen and respond to their peers. It allows them to practice their speaking and listening skills. Group discussions can be done both in class and online by dividing students into small groups and assigning them a topic to discuss in English. Besides, role-play

activities encourage students to use English to interact with each other and to practice their listening and speaking skills by providing them with a scenario and a role to play. For example, students can role-play a job interview or a customer service interaction. Pair work is also an effective activity in which students work in pairs to complete given English tasks. For instance, they can practice giving directions or describing a picture to their partner. This activity allows for more individualized attention and feedback. In addition, debate can help students develop their critical thinking and speaking skills by encouraging them to use persuasive language and actively listen to the opposing team's arguments. It can be done by dividing students into teams and assigning them a topic to debate in English. Moreover, collaborative writing is a productive activity that helps students develop their writing, speaking, and collaboration skills. By working together with their peers, they can build their language skills while developing important life skills such as communication, collaboration, and critical thinking. Incorporating collaborative learning into English instruction allows students to feel more engaged and motivated in their language-learning journey. It can be done by assigning students a group writing task such as creating a story or a dialogue. During collaborative writing, students are encouraged to work together to brainstorm ideas, organize their thoughts, and write in English.

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