The Effect of Using a Program Based on Cooperative Learning Strategy on Developing some Oral Communication Skills
Of
Students, at English Department, Faculty of Education, Sana'a University

A Thesis
Submitted for the Fulfillment of the M. A. Degree in (TEFL)

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Abstract

Researcher's Name: Khaled Mohsen Mohammed Zuheer.

Title of the Thesis: The Effect of Using a Program Based on Cooperative Learning Strategy on Developing some Oral Communication Skills of the Second Level Students, at English Department, Faculty of Education, Sana'a University

The purpose of the present study is to investigate the effective of using a cooperative learning strategy STAD-based program on developing some oral communication skills of second level students, English Department, Faculty of Education, Sana'a University. Based on literature review, related studies and a panel of jury members' point of view, a list of 5 oral communication skills was proposed and used as the most related skills to the second level students. The experimental design of the study depended on the voluntary basis of choosing the group of the study, which consisted of (30) second level students.

The researcher has developed and used the following tools: A pre-post oral communication skills test, and a cooperative learning strategy STAD-based program that contains a teacher's guide and a students' handbook. The program was taught to students in a six-week period. Paired t-test "SPSS" program was used to measure the effect of the training program on the students' oral performance. Results revealed that the program was effective in developing students' oral communication skills as there were statically significant difference between the pre and post administration of the test. The researcher recommended that during the teaching of oral communication, students should be provided with a relaxing, effective, and interactive environment that fosters interaction and helps to develop the students' oral communication skills.

Contents of the Study

Chapter One

Problem of the Study

1.1. Introduction:

As the world grows more complex and as democracy spreads throughout the world, the need for learners to interact cooperatively, work toward group goals and think critically has undoubtedly increased. Educational researchers, politicians and teachers all pressed for a change and accentuated the need for a more critical, social, and cooperative approach to study work in order for learners to be able to solve difficult problems, examine circumstances critically, weigh alternative opinions and make thoughtful informed decisions (Donough, 2004).

Galal (1987) indicated that students who are enrolled in teacher education courses for the bachelor degree are expected to have the abilities and skills of dealing with many related fields. Soler (2002) stated that, there is a growing interest in the field of second or foreign language acquisition and language teaching to understand language learning through interaction.

Learning a language is learning how to communicate in culturally, socially and academically in appropriate ways consistent with the norms and customs of the target language users. Communication is a process of making meaning through interactions between people. The more interactions among students as well as between the teacher and students, the better the language learning achieved by students. Teachers play a critical role in promoting interactions among students and engaging them in the learning process. Cooperative small-group learning is widely

accepted as one way in which teachers can promote this interaction to benefit all students (Tan, 1999).

In a cooperative learning approach, students and teachers are in a state of dynamic interaction in the classroom (Mahran, 2000). When students interact in cooperative groups, they learn to give and receive information, develop new understandings and perspectives, and communicate in a socially acceptable manner. It is through interacting with each other in reciprocal dialogues that students learn to use language differently to explain new experiences and new realities and, in so doing, construct new ways of thinking and feeling (Gillies, 2004).

Pair and small group activities that involve interactions between learners are often used in second or foreign language classrooms for both theoretical and pedagogical reasons. A variety of theoretical approaches to L2 acquisition provide a rationale for the use of pair and small group activities. Donough (2004) declared that several theoretical approaches to L2 acquisition state that pair and small group activities generate learning opportunities through various interactional features that occur when learners engage in the communication of meaning.

The benefit of interaction in EFL is to improve comprehension and enhancing communicative competence of students. Morel (2004) stated that in the specific context of the investigation, the students have limited possibilities of putting their linguistic knowledge into practice, in many cases this practice occurs within university classrooms. Consequently, the belief is that we must optimize the probability of student interaction within the lectures for improved comprehension and for aiding communicative competence.

Cooperative learning refers to the instructional use of small groups in which students work together to accomplish meaningful study tasks. Research in the second or foreign language classroom indicates that cooperative learning is potentially beneficial for second language learners in a number of ways (Xiaping, 2003).

Cooperative learning strategies allow all levels of learning from preproduction to high level to tackle tasks that are appropriate to their language proficiency skills and also it allows each student to take an important part in doing the group's assigned tasks since without each student's expertise, the group's task is incomplete (Yahya, et al. 2002).

Robert Slavin and his colleagues at John Hopkins University developed an approach called Student Team Achievement Division (STAD). Mahran (2000: 9) defined (STAD) as "a student team learning technique designed to provide equal opportunity for all students to succeed and extrinsically motivate students so that they encourage and help each other learn". STAD is the most extensively researched of all cooperative learning methods and is very adaptable to a wide range of subjects and grades. In STAD, students study with 4-5 members following a teacher presentation. Teams are made up of students with varying academic abilities. STAD has been used in a wide variety of subjects, from math to language arts to social studies ...etc.

To conclude, cooperative learning can be defined as a range of concepts and techniques for enhancing the value of student-student interaction. Cooperative learning in the classroom is an effective way to promote language learning of all learners. The classroom is organized for at least part of the instructional time, so that the goals are most likely to

be attained when learners cooperate and collaborate. When the class works together toward a goal, they become a positive, supportive and successful group.

1.2. Background of the Problem:

Teaching oral and speaking skills in a foreign language context is not an easy task rather it puts heavy demands on both the teacher and the students who should learn these oral skills to communicate with the target language. It is necessary, therefore, to give these skills more attention and more consideration (Sayed, 2005).

Wang (2005) stated that with the focus on language and communication in the major criteria for foreign language learning, foreign language instructors never stop searching and developing better ways for reaching more effective teaching goals, accessing authentic materials and providing techniques that benefit their students' knowledge and enhance their skills in these particular areas.

Cooperative learning is beneficial and the resulting learned skills will be reflected in future work on the job through project teams and group work (Mcardle, 2005). Learning to speak a foreign language requires more than knowing its grammatical and semantic rules. Learners must also acquire knowledge of how native speakers use the language in the context of structured interpersonal exchange, in which many factors interact.

In order to provide effective guidance in developing competent speakers of English, it is necessary to examine the factors affecting adult learners' oral communication, components underlying speaking

proficiency and specific skills or strategies used in communication. Shumin (1997: 8) indicated that "through cooperative learning strategies teachers can help adult learners to develop their abilities to communicate in the target language".

We know that language is learned well when learners have opportunities to use it. Cooperative learning strategy (STAD) can help teachers to let more learners participate actively in the class. In non-cooperative classrooms, teachers often talk most of the time and only a few of the brightest learners have the opportunity to participate, usually by responding to the teacher.

In cooperative activities (STAD), everyone talks sometimes to peers in small group, sometimes to the whole groups to report a group's findings. According to Abdullah, (2004: 9) "cooperative learning is chosen for implementation at the class in order to increase the amount of interaction among students in English and other classes. By interacting with peers, it is hoped that students would increase their oral skills, help each other learn and become less dependent on teachers".

One of the most difficult tasks of the teacher of English is helping his/her students reach the level of free communication in spite of the fact that the ultimate goal of teaching English should be to enable students to communicate and to be capable of participating in the social life of the community in which they deal with (Nazir, 1989: 6). By doing so, they can help their students be able to transfer knowledge learned inside the class to real life situations. Having the students use the language in the life-like situations must be the primary principle in language teaching.

1.3. Statement of the Problem:

It has to be kept in mind that people do not communicate by just composing sentences, but by using sentences to make statements of difficult kinds, to record, to describe, to classify, to give and ask for information, to ask questions, make requests, etc. Therefore, students acquire the language by using it. Some of English language students are unable to communicate in English, because they are not given the opportunity to practice what they have learned.

In the Department of English, Faculty of Education, Sana'a University students are supposed to be able to communicate with each other inside and outside the classroom after being trained in the four language skills. Yet, they have little or no opportunity to use the language orally. In fact, they are given training in reading, writing, and listening skills, but speaking or oral communication is neglected.

Conversational English is rarely heard by the students in the Department of English, Faculty of Education, Sana'a University. It has been confirmed by lecturers who teach oral communication skills to the second level students that the students have many problems in this field, most of the graduates are poor in oral communication skills. Therefore, the research tried to investigate the effect of using a program based on cooperative learning on developing some oral communication skills of second level students, Faculty of Education, Sana'a University.

1.4. The Purpose of the Study:

The purpose of the study is to investigate the effect of a program based on cooperative learning strategy (STAD) on developing some oral communication skills of the second level students, at English Department, Faculty of Education, Sana'a University.

1.5. Questions of the Study:

The present study attempts to answer the following question:

What is the effect of a program based on cooperative learning strategy (STAD) on developing some oral communication skills of the second level students, at the English Department, Faculty of Education, Sana'a University.

This main question is divided into two sub-questions:

What are the oral communication skills that are necessary for the second level students, in the English Department, Faculty of Education, Sana'a University.

How far is the program effective on developing the oral communication skills of the second level students, in the English Department, Faculty of Education, Sana'a University.

1.6. Hypotheses of the Study:

1- There would be statistically significant difference in the mean scores of the research group in the pre and post administration in overall oral communication skills favoring the post one.

2- There would be statistically significant difference in the mean scores of the research group in the pre and post administration in each oral communication skills favoring the post one.

1.7. Limitations of the Study:

The study is limited to the following:

1- Second level students, at the English Department, Faculty of Education, Sana'a University. In this level students are supposed to have acquired a basic ground of skills to be able to participate in the cooperative learning groups.

2- Some of the oral communication skills, chosen by jury members, since oral communication contains many skills that is difficult to be reached in a study.

A- Giving and Eliciting Information.

B- Giving Oral Presentation.

C- Explanation.

D- Expressing Opinions and Attitudes.

E- Talking about the Future.

3- The suggested program will be based on (Students Team Achievement Division) "STAD" a kind of cooperative learning strategy.

1.8. Definition of Terms:

1.8.1. Cooperative Learning (C L):

Cooperative learning in this study means a variety of concepts and techniques for enhancing the value of student-student interaction. It refers to the instructional use of small groups in which students work together to accomplish meaningful school tasks (Mahran, 2000: 35). Furthermore, it is a pedagogical technique that has students work together in small and mixed groups on a structured learning task with the aim of maximizing their own and each other's learning (Yang, 2005: 45).

Cooperative learning is a successful teaching strategy in which small teams, each with students of different levels of ability, use a variety of learning activities to improve their understanding of a subject. Each member of a team is responsible not only for learning what is taught but

also for helping teammates learn, thus creating an atmosphere of achievement and practice.

1.8.2. Student Team Achievement Division (STAD) Strategy:

Strategy refers to the procedure or the techniques that a person follows to achieve a required goal (Galal, 1993: 18). Robert Slavin and his colleagues at John Hopkins University, based on years of research on cooperative learning developed an approach called Student Team Achievement Division (STAD). It is one of cooperative learning strategies that is a very adaptable to a wide range of subjects and grades. Students with varying academic abilities are assigned to 4 or 5 member teams in order to study and discuss what has been initially taught by the teacher and to help each student reach the highest level of achievement.

1.8.3. Oral Communication:

Oral Communication in this study means the exchange of oral information in English between two or more persons orally. The following skills were the ones of the highest obtained frequency:

A- Giving and Eliciting Information: How to be able to give, determine and clarify information.

B- Giving Oral Presentation: How to be able to give, produce and stand in front of other to talk English orally.

C- Explanation: How to be able to explain and define something.

D- Expressing Opinions and Attitudes: How to be able to express feelings, opinions and attitudes toward something.

E- Talking about the Future: How to be able to talk about events.

1.8.4. Classroom Interaction:

Interaction is the process referring to 'face-to-face' interaction. It can be either verbal, channeled through spoken words, or non-verbal, channeled through touch, proximity, eye-contact, facial expressions or gesturing.

1.8.5. Communicative Competence:

Communicative competence is a concept introduced by Dell Hymes and discussed and redefined by many authors. Hymes' original idea was that speakers of a language have to have more than grammatical competence in order to be able to communicate effectively in a language (Chen, 2005). Chomsky defines communicative competence as "part of developing a theory of the linguistic system, idealized as the abstract language knowledge of the monolingual adult native speaker, and distinct from how they happen to use and experience language" (Chomsky, 1965).

Communicative competence is made up of four competence areas: grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic.

- **Grammatical competence**: how to use the grammar, syntax, and vocabulary of a language. Grammatical competence asks: What words do I use? How do I put them into phrases and sentences?

- **Sociolinguistic competence**: how to use and respond to language appropriately, given the setting, the topic, and the relationships among the people communicating. Sociolinguistic competence asks: Which words and phrases fit this setting and this topic? How can I express a specific attitude (courtesy, authority, friendliness, respect) when I need to? How do I know what attitude another person is expressing?

- **Discourse competence**: how to interpret the larger context and how to construct longer stretches of language so that the parts make up a

coherent whole. Discourse competence asks: How are words, phrases and sentences put together to create conversations, speeches, email messages and newspaper articles?

- **Strategic competence**: how to recognize and repair communication breakdowns, how to work around gaps in one's knowledge of the language and how to learn more about the language and in the context. Strategic competence asks: How do I know when I've misunderstood or when someone has misunderstood me? What do I say then? How can I express my ideas if I don't know the name of something or the right verb form to use?

Chapter Two

Theoretical Background

2.1. Cooperative Learning:

2.1.1. What Is Cooperative Learning?

Many definitions of cooperative learning have been stated; for example, McCloskey (2000: 367) defines cooperative learning as an instructional method that depends on the exchange of information among pairs or group members. Each learner is held responsible for his or her own learning and responsible for the group as well. Learners are also motivated to increase both their own learning and learning of others.

Carter (2001: 38) defines cooperative learning as a basic instructional strategy that can be implemented in every grade level and subject area. Lessons may be structured competitively so that students work against each other to achieve a goal that only one or a few students can achieve. Carter (p.41) adds that cooperative learning refers to a set of instructional techniques in which students work in small and mixed-ability learning groups.

Michael (2002: 8) defines cooperative learning as a process by which students work together in groups to master material initially presented by instructor and it is a classroom environment where students interact with one another in small heterogeneous groups while working together on academic tasks. In addition, James (2002: 8) defines cooperative learning as working together to accomplish shared goals.

Dohron (2002: 44) describes cooperative learning as the use of small groups for instructional purposes that require students to work together for their own and each other's learning. Dohron (p.45) adds, "In order for cooperative learning groups to be cooperative in nature, the students in the groups must believe that all the group members are equally important to the success of the group. They must be able to use the appropriate interpersonal and small-group skills that are needed to work cooperatively".

Brandt (2002) and Liang, et al. (2003: 35), claim that cooperative learning refers to the instructional use of small groups in which students work together to accomplish meaningful school tasks. Smith et al. (2007), state that cooperative learning exists when students work together to accomplish shared learning goals.

In the relationship between cooperative learning and teaching EFL there are many definitions in this field for example, Gabriel (1999: 3); James (2002: 6); Arendale (2005: 3) and EL-Deghaidy, (2007), define cooperative learning as a range of concepts and techniques for enhancing the value of student-student interaction. Collaborative learning refers to a wide range of formal and informal activities that include any form of peer student interaction. Cooperative learning is an instructional approach to learning that encourages interaction between and among two or more learners to maximize their own and each other's learning. And of course interaction is a best way to let learners practice oral communication skills in EFL.

Jacobs (2004: 4) defines cooperative learning as "principles and techniques for helping students work together more effectively". Jacobs

(p.6) states that cooperative learning and group interaction are structured in an attempt to balance the opportunities that each student has for creating output. This contrasts with the situation often seen in group activities in which more student talk exists, but a relatively small group of students take most of the speaking turns.

To summarize the previous definitions, cooperative learning is one of the most widespread and fruitful areas of theory, research, and practice in education. This learning strategy has been applied to a wide variety of content areas at all levels. Cooperative learning is a pedagogical technique in which students work together in small, and mixed groups on a structured learning task with the aim of maximizing their own and each other's learning.

2.1.2. Essential Components of Cooperative Learning:

Several elements distinguish cooperative learning from whole class instruction, individualized instruction, and traditional forms of group work. Cooperative learning includes the following basic elements:

2.1.2.1. Positive Interdependence:

Positive interdependence is defined as having specific roles for each participant that are necessary for the group to work toward the goal(s) set by the teacher, i.e., each student have a particular role within the group. No single student is fully capable of performing all the tasks required by a particular assignment or project (Ransdell, 2003: 5).

Webb (2002: 9) describes positive interdependence as the first and most important element in cooperative learning. He claims that, "in this element, responsibility for the group and the individual is structured

into the lesson or subject". Webb adds that you should give a clear task and a group goal so that students believe they "sink or swim together".

Ghaith (2002: 7) states that positive interdependence is a feeling among group members that if one fails, all fail, if one succeeds, everybody succeeds. Group members realize that each member's efforts benefit not only himself-herself, but all other group members as well. Positive interdependence provides a feeling of support within the group. Jacobs (2006: 5) asserts that positive interdependence is a perception among group members that what helps one group member helps all, and what hurts one group member hurts all. Positive interdependence encourages cooperation and a feeling of support.

Ross (2002: 10) assumes that positive interdependence means, success being dependent on the success of other students. Andrusyk, et al. (2003: 22) add the same idea, that positive interdependence exists when students believe that the team cannot succeed unless every member of the team succeeds.

Arendale (2005: 3) sees that "positive interdependence is established in the group through adoption of different roles that support the group moving to complete a goal". McCloskey (2000: 3) stresses that positive interdependence makes learners need one another to achieve. When one learner achieves, others benefit.

Positive social interdependence may also promote cohesion and solidarity among learners. Meanwhile, negative interdependence results from inappropriate competition when students engage in a win–lose struggle to see who is best. Cooperative learning may be one way to promote social support within classrooms as learners work together to maximize each other's learning through positive rather than negative or

neutral forms of social interdependence. Positive social interdependence is likely to be achieved in classrooms where learners work cooperatively in small groups according to the principles of positive goal and resource interdependence.

2.1.2.2. Individual Accountability:

The second essential element of cooperative learning is individual and group accountability. (Ghaith, 2002: 7) indicated that individual accountability exists when each individual member feels responsible to learn, to demonstrate their learning, and to contribute to the learning of teammates. The purpose of cooperative learning is to make each member a stronger individual in their own right. The success of the group is not measured by a particular group product, but by the individual progress of each group member. Jacobs (2006: 5) defines individual accountability as; "the team's success depends on the individual learning of all team members".

Nevin, et al. (2001: 7); Ross (2002: 10); Andrusyk et al. (2003: 22), state that the student is held responsible by teammates for contributing his or her fair share to the group's success. Individuals who need more assistance, support, encouragement, and other accommodations to complete the assignment are acknowledged. Individual accountability occurs when each student is assessed individually with the results reported back to the group. Individual accountability lets students work up to their capabilities or avoiding the free-rider problem.

Tan (1999: 3) determines that individual accountability is a feeling among a group, that each member is responsible for his-her own learning as well as that of his-her teammates. McCloskey (2000: 3) asserts the

same idea that in the case of individual and group responsibility learners are evaluated through grades and assessment of group products and are responsible for learning both as individuals and as group members, so marks are divided. They get part of their mark for how well they do individually and part of the mark for how well the group achieve.

The element of individual accountability teaches the students to perform higher as individuals by learning as a team. Individual accountability exists when the performance of each individual student is assessed and the results are given back to the group and the individual in order to ascertain who needs more assistance, support, and encouragement in completing the assignment. In this element students assess themselves and give feedback, which benefit the students by being able to see where improvement is needed.

2.1.2.3. Group Processing:

The third essential component of cooperative learning is group processing. Webb (2002: 10) states that this element exists when group members discuss how well they are achieving their goals and maintaining effective working relationships. Webb adds that continuous improvement of the process of learning results from the careful analysis of how members are working together and determining how group effectiveness can be enhanced. By group processing, members can then see how to improve their group cohesiveness.

Brandt (2002: 39) describes group processing as; "the activities that allow discussion of interpersonal skills and influence the effectiveness of the group's ability to work together". Ghaith (2002: 8); and Andrusyk et al. (2003: 23) assert that group processing allows team members to address how well the group is functioning and to maintain

the effectiveness of the group. Group processing takes place when students analyze and discuss how well their group is working together and how their group might function better in the future.

2.1.2.4. Social Skills:

Webb (2002: 10) defines social skills as group members knowing how to provide effective leadership, decision-making, trust building, communication, conflict-management, and be motivated to use the prerequisite skills. Ransdell (2003), and Faryadi (2007), emphasize that the focus should be on the participants` ability to share materials. Participants also demonstrate consideration for others by keeping their voices at a reasonable level.

Nevin et al. (2001: 7) and Dollman (2007), state that in the case of social skills, each group member describes what actions were helpful and unhelpful. The group agrees on what actions to continue or change. The purpose is to clarify and improve the effectiveness of each member's contributions to the collaborative effort to achieve the group's goals. Ghaith (2002: 7) views that collaborative skills receive emphasis because to work successfully with others, students need to develop collaborative skills, such as asking for help, making suggestions, and disagreeing politely. Social skills involve efforts to encourage all group members to participate to a roughly equal degree. Means of doing this include providing each member with a turn to speak or to add particular information that they need to contribute to the group.

2.1.2.5. Face-to-Face Interaction:

The fifth essential component of cooperative learning is face-to-face interaction. In this element students do real work together, sharing

resources, helping, supporting, encouraging, and praising each other's efforts to learn. By this interaction, they promote each other's success (Webb, 2002: 11).

Ghaith (2002: 9) notes that face-to-face interaction is based on the idea that groups succeed only when members engage in dialogue with each other to explain, debate, encourage, and question one another. Also Krantz (2003: 25), and Michiel et al. (2008), indicate that through face-to-face interaction, the students get the opportunity to establish positive interactions and create intrinsic behaviors which will benefit the students as productive members of society.

2.1.3. Student Team Achievement Division (STAD) Strategy:

Robert Slavin and his colleagues at John Hopkins University, based on years of research on cooperative learning developed an approach called Student Team Achievement Division (STAD). It is the most extensively researched of all cooperative learning methods and is very adaptable to a wide range of subjects and grades. In STAD, students study with 4-5 members following a teacher presentation. Teams are made up of students with varying academic abilities. STAD has been used in a wide variety of subjects, from math to language arts to social studies.

STAD is a way to organize classes, with the principal goal being to accelerate the achievement of all students. The approach operates on the principle that students work together to learn and to become responsible for their teammates learning as well as their own. Consistent with the core principles of cooperative learning outlined earlier, STAD emphasizes having team goals and success dependent on the learning of all group members (Norman, 2005).

Slavin (1977) and Nichols (1996) indicated that (Student Team Achievement Division) effects on percent of time-on-task, motivation, liking of others, number of classmates named as friends, and peer support for academic performance. Positive achievement division effects were found on percent of time-on-task, feeling of being liked, liking of others, number of classmates named as friends, and peer support for academic performance.

Cooperative learning strategies like (STAD) have proven successful across a wide range of subjects and age levels. There is a theoretical relevance of cooperative learning to the second language instruction because of its ability to provide maximum opportunities for meaningful input and output in an interactive and supportive learning environment. Cooperative learning also integrates language and content learning and it varied applications are in harmony with the pedagogical implications of the input, socialization, and interactive theories of L2 acquisition. This is because Cooperative learning enhances the motivation and psychological adjustment of language learners (Norman**,** 2005).

2.1.4. Cooperative Learning and Teaching EFL:

Cooperative small-group learning is widely accepted as one way in which teachers can promote interaction to benefit all students. Bejarano (1997: 205) emphasizes that "one way to improve the quality of communicative interaction in the classroom is to increase students' use of Modified-Interaction and Social-Interaction Strategies"**.** Gillies (2004: 260) states that cooperative learning creates opportunities for students to actively interact with each other, negotiate meaning around a task, and appropriate new ways of thinking and doing.

Mayo (2002) and Hanze, (2007), explain that through interaction in cooperative language learning, the learners' attention may become focused on those parts of their interlanguage that deviate from the target language or on forms that are not yet in the learners' interlanguage repertoire. Ghaith (2003: 451) reports that cooperative language learning has been proclaimed as an effective instructional approach in promoting the cognitive and linguistic development of learners of English as a Second Language (ESL) or English as a Foreign Language (EFL).

Teachers often use the variable of second language proficiency when creating heterogeneous groups. This means that more proficient students will be available to attempt to facilitate comprehension of their less proficient peers. The teaching of collaborative skills can play a crucial role in promoting peer interaction, because these skills provide students with strategies for effective interaction. Examples include collaborative skills that second language learners can use to repair communication breakdowns, such as asking for repetition, slower speed of speaking, louder volume, and explanation of words. Collaborative skills also prove useful when students understand the input they have received but wish to disagree or ask for further information (Jacobs, 2002: 7).

According to Yahya et al. (2002: 4), a cooperative learning lesson allows all levels of English language learners to tackle tasks that are appropriate to their language proficiency skills and also that allows each student to take an important part in doing the group's assigned tasks since without each student's expertise, the group's task is incomplete.

Cochran (1989: 5) confirms that classroom activities allow students at all levels of English language proficiency to participate. Liang (2003: 37) discusses that cooperative learning is potentially beneficial for second language learners in a number of ways. It can provide more opportunities for L2 interaction and help improve L2 proficiency. It can help students develop L2 skills. It can also include opportunities for the integration of language and content learning.

Pair and small group activities that involve interactions between learners are often used in second language (L2) classrooms for both theoretical and pedagogical reasons. Interaction may facilitate L2 learning by drawing attention to language form in the context of meaning, and pushing to produce more complex or accurate target language forms. Pair and small group activities provide learners with more time to speak the target language than teacher-fronted activities. In addition, learners may feel less anxious and more confident when interacting with peers during pair or small group activities than during whole-class discussions (McDonough, 2004: 210).

In English language teaching, communicative language teaching and cooperative learning share common characteristics. In a meaningful task students are asked to exchange information among themselves in small groups. This kind of student collaboration has many benefits, such as, the whole class actively participates in a task at the same time and students can then compare their findings when the task is over, and the meaningful task is rehearsed in class for later use in real communication outside the classroom.

2.1.5. The Role of the Teacher in Cooperative Learning:

Teacher's belief about using cooperative learning plays an important role in its implementation. Brandt (2002: 38-40) suggests that in a cooperative learning lesson, the role of the teacher with the cooperation of the students, becomes as the task setter. As group cooperatively work on the assigned tasks, the teacher's role changes to a facilitator/coach mode. In this role, the teacher moves from group to group to motivate the learning process. The facilitator role provides the classroom teacher with an opportunity to provide on-going feedback and the ability to assess the progress of each cooperative group.

Andrusyk, et al. (2003: 22-25) report that the teacher's role in a cooperative learning lesson entails several components, such as placing the students into groups, planning the lesson, explaining the academic task, monitoring the groups as they progress through the task, and evaluating the quality of the work produced. According to Gerwels (2005: 3), classroom management decisions must be made in several areas; for example, whom to place together in groups, how to organize materials and furniture to facilitate working together, and how to make sure everyone is participating and learning. And all of that is the responsibility of the teacher. For teachers who are using cooperative learning groups to teach a lesson will require quite different skills.

Yahya et al. (2002: 3) state that in planning cooperative learning, teachers take several roles. First, teachers make pre-instructional decisions about grouping students and assigning appropriate tasks. Teachers have to be able to explain both the academic task and the cooperative structure to students and then must monitor and intervene

when necessary. The teacher is also the one who is responsible for evaluating student learning and the effectiveness of each group's work.

Teachers must create groups that are equitable so that all students participate as possible as they can, and use multiple-ability strategies. Teachers also need to convince students of two things: - That different intellectual abilities are required in cooperative learning, - and that no one student has all of the abilities needed, but that each member of the group will have some of the abilities.

Dohrn (2002: 48) proposes some useful guidelines for teachers to follow when creating cooperative groups such as:

• Groups should be limited 4-6 members.

• Team need to be diverse in nature.

• The group should be together long enough so that students can get to know each other and experience group success.

• Start with activities that allow students to get to know each other.

• Create team identity to encourage group cohesiveness.

• Clearly define rules, expectations and behavior.

• Establish rules that will encourage students to work well together.

• Remind students of the rules each time the groups` change.

• Make the consequences for breaking the rules clear and check for understanding.

• Create rules and jobs in order to complete the task given.

• Change roles to ensure equal opportunity of responsibility.

• Circulate and monitor behavior and watch for unwanted conflicts and resolve them quickly.

It is the teacher's task to teach the students how to form cooperative groups and to take the time necessary to introduce each management tactic and to guide students in the practice in the tactic's use. Carter et al. (2001: 41) assume some useful guidelines for teachers to follow when creating cooperative groups such as:

• Specify the group name.

• Specify the size of the group.

• State the purpose, materials, and steps of the activity.

• Teach the procedures.

• Specify and teach the cooperative skills needed.

• Hold the individuals accountable for the work of the group.

• Teach ways for the students to evaluate how successfully they have worked together.

Erdal et al. (2003: 7) determine that teachers need to spend time with individuals or groups observing their progress and providing appropriate assistance when it is needed. Ransdellp (2003: 13) asserts that "the teacher also struggled with giving their students full control of their small groups and of their learning".

To conclude, the teacher in cooperative learning becomes a guide, a stimulator, and one who encourages, but not one who lectures nor dispenses information. He/she is a resource person who has much knowledge of keeping learners on task. The teacher as resource person has numerous materials and necessary information from which learners in cooperative learning may gather what is needed to achieve objectives. As a helper and facilitator, the teacher is motivated to assist learners to be creative, to engage in critical thought, and to identify and solve problems.

2.1.6. Cooperative Learning Advantages:

Cooperative learning is a unique format, with different expectations for teachers and for students, compared to traditional activities such as whole class discussion, teacher presentation, or individual work. The following are some of the benefits of using cooperative learning in the classroom:

2.1.6.1. Enhancing Student's Social Skills:

In cooperative learning groups, students can exercise their collaborative skills and practice working with others to achieve mutual benefit for everyone. Yang et al. (2005); Willis (2007) and Clevenger et al. (2008) state that one of the most appealing attributes of cooperative learning is its dual focus on academic and social learning benefits. Social benefits include more on-task behaviors and helping interactions with group members, higher interpersonal and self-esteem, more positive relations with others, more involvement in classroom activities, more favorable attitudes toward schooling, less disorder in the classroom, as well as improved social-emotional skills.

Carter et al. (2001: 37) indicate that the social skills attained through cooperative learning include: communication and listening skills (verbal and non-verbal communication skills), leadership (problem solving, decision making, and the acceptance and support of others) trust building (maintain working relationships and enhance teamwork). Schlitz et al. (2001: 24) and Ashtiani et al. (2007), point out that "using cooperative learning in the regular and special education classrooms can help to teach students how to socialize appropriately and can give them opportunities to practice. It can provide tools to transfer the skills learned into real life situations".

In cooperative learning, students have opportunities to talk through the material, to explain it to each other and look at it in different ways. Giving and receiving information enhances student performance. Students feel that they have a chance to succeed, and believe working toward a successful outcome is a valuable goal. Students` social relationships improved because when students work together toward a common goal they have a chance to get to know one another as individuals.

2.1.6.2. Appreciating Differences:

The more students work in cooperative groups, the more they understand, retain, and feel better about themselves and their peers. Working in a cooperative environment encourages student responsibility for learning. Cooperative learning increases student motivation by providing peer support. As part of a learning team, students can achieve success by working well with others. Cooperative learning promotes greater cross ethnic interaction and the acceptance of mainstreamed academically handicapped students (Caposey, et al. 2003: 28).

Ongel (2003: 7) and Gillies et al. (2008) determine that cooperative learning is an effective way to build community between home and school cultures with culturally and linguistically diverse students. In cooperative learning settings, students from different backgrounds and characteristics work together towards common goals, to know each other, and to work with each other as equals, which result in a wide variety of outcomes.

According to Lie (2000: 125); Krantz (2003: 25) and Gillies (2004: 265), cooperative learning creates opportunities for students to actively interact with others, negotiate meaning around a task, and appropriate new ways of thinking and doing. Cooperative learning groups provide students with opportunities to enhance inter-ethnic relation and learn to appreciate differences. Cooperative learning activities in the classroom improve student's relationships with others, especially those of various social and ethnic groups. Cooperative learning gives the students a chance to take a hard look at their own ways of relating to others. This method allowed them to look at the positive and negative parts of their own behavior.

Cooperative learning may be one way to promote social support within classrooms as learners work together to maximize each other's learning through positive rather than negative or neutral forms of social interdependence. Carter et al. (2001: 38); Ghaith (2002: 267) and Ediger (2002: 11) state that positive social interdependence is likely to be achieved in classrooms where learners work cooperatively in small groups according to the principles of positive goal and resource interdependence. Cooperative learning increases contact between students and engages them in pleasant activities together thus increasing a positive affect between students. Goals in life can be achieved in cooperating with each other, rather than through "dog eats dog approaches".

2.1.6.3. Individualization of Instruction:

In a traditional classroom with a heavy emphasis on a lecturing method and a whole-class discussion, teachers have to cater their instruction to the average. If a few students cannot keep up with the class, the teacher cannot always stop the class to help them.

Lie, (2000), and Krause et al. (2008), argue that with cooperative learning groups, there is the potential for students to receive individual assistance from teachers and from their peers. Help from peers increases learning both for the students being helped as well as for those giving the help. For the students being helped, the assistance from their peers enables them to move away from dependence on teachers and gain more opportunities to enhance their learning. For the students giving the help, the cooperative learning groups serve as opportunities to increase their own performance. They have the chance to experience and learn that "teaching is the best teacher". McDonough (2004: 210) asserts that cooperative learning gives instructors opportunities to work with individual learners.

2.1.6.4. Increasing Students Participation:

When groups are used, students receive much more chance to speak. First, there is an increase in the percentage of time when students are talking, instead of the teacher. Second, during the time for students to talk, many of them are speaking at any time (Lie, 2000: 125). According to Abdullah et al. (2002: 10), second language learning fits cooperative learning through the Interaction Hypothesis which states that language learners increase the quantity of comprehensible input they receive by interacting with their interlocutors (the people with whom they are speaking). Cooperative learning activities provide a context in which students may be more likely to interact than in a whole class setting.

Ongel (2003); Jacobs (2006), and Hijzen et al. (2007), maintain that cooperative learning encourages all the group members to feel that they need to participate and learn. Cooperative learning increases student's

participation and interaction with each other, thus, creating an environment for productive learning.

2.1.6.5. Increasing Motivation and Positive Attitude toward Learning:

In a traditional class, only teachers provide encouragement to students. In cooperative learning groups, students can encourage and help each other. The cooperative atmosphere of working in a small group may help develop "affective bonds" among students and greatly motivate them to work together (Lie, 2000: 125). According to Nowlin (2003: 4), and Yavuz, (2007), cooperative learning fosters positive attitudes toward working with others, and creates thinking skills that are necessary to acquire and integrate knowledge.

Ediger (2002: 11); Yahya (2002: 4) and Ghaith (2003: 452) reported that through cooperative learning, learners can realize that classes and learning may be enjoyable. Cooperative learning leads to great motivation toward learning, to increase time on task, and to improve self-esteem. Cooperative learning promotes language acquisition by providing comprehensible input in developmentally appropriate ways and in a supportive and motivating environment. Cooperative learning enhances the motivation and psychosocial adjustment of L2 learners.

2.1.6.6. Decreasing Anxiety:

Students often feel anxious to speak in front of the whole class. In contrast, there is less anxiety connected with speaking in the smaller group. In addition, when a student represents the group and reports to the whole class, he/she feels more support, because the answer is not just from one student alone, but from the whole group (Lie, 2000: 125).

Abdullah et al. (2002: 10) and McDonough (2004: 210) state that peer groups may provide a more motivating, and less anxiety-producing environment for language use, thus, increasing the chances that students will take in more input. Learners may feel less anxious and more confident when interacting with peers during pair or small group activities than during whole-class discussions.

2.1.6.7. Increasing Self-Esteem:

One purpose in education is to enable students to become life-long learners, people who can think and learn without teachers telling them what to do every minute. By shifting from dependence on teachers, cooperative group activities help students become independent learners and form a community of learners among themselves. Cooperative learning helps students learn to build their own self-esteem and build trust with other students (Lie, 2000: 125).

2.1.6.8. Increasing Academic Achievement:

The more one works in cooperative learning groups, the more a person learns, the more he retains from those lessons, and the better he understands the materials. Cooperative group activities tended to result in more willingness to challenge oneself, more willingness to persist at difficult task, a greater use of critical thinking skills, more evidence of cooperative thinking, more transfer of learning from one situation to another, more time on task, a more positive attitude toward the task being completed (Dohron et al. 2002: 50).

James (2002: 11) and Holliday (2002: 3) state that cooperative learning fosters exercises that require students to talk and to listen, to write, to read, and to reflect on what is being studied rather than listen

positively to a lecturer. Cooperation results to higher achievement and greater productivity. Collaborative learning promotes greater use of higher-level reasoning strategies and creates a productive learning environment. Cooperative learning is the best means of improving the academic achievement.

Finally, cooperative learning is an effective strategy for classrooms with English language learners. Pair and small group activities provide learners with more time to speak the target language than teacher-fronted activities, and promote learner autonomy and self-directed learning. Small groups provide greater intensity of environment, so that the quality of language practice is increased, and the opportunities for feedback and monitoring as well.

2.1.7. Cooperative Learning: Problems and Solutions:
2.1.7.1. Unequal Participation:

One fear teachers have about using cooperative learning is that low status students will not participate and/or that high status students will take over the group. To solve this problem, teachers can create groups that are equitable so that all students participate as possible as they can, and use multiple-ability strategies, if cooperative learning is to work. Teachers also need to convince students of two things: different intellectual abilities are required in cooperative learning, that no one of student has all the abilities needed, but that each member of the group will have some of the abilities (Yahya, 2002: 9).

Sometimes one or two students in the group doing all the work, while the others sit relax. So, one way to encourage the participation of all group members is to hold everyone responsible for working with a

task or a level of performance. Teachers can do this by giving individual quizzes, by having each student to complete an individual worksheet or project. In addition, the teacher has to circulate throughout the room, observing each groups activity. In this way he/she can note problems, provide assistance, and keeping students dealing with a task.

2.1.7.2. Lack of Cooperation:

Most students have little experience working in cooperative learning groups, and norm of the traditional classroom that are dramatically different from the norms of successful group work. If the teacher wants his/her students to work together productively, he/she must plan to divide groups and preparing suitable tasks carefully, and teach students the new norms. During cooperative learning activities the teacher may:

- Ask students to help one another.

- Explain material to all students.

- Check that they understand.

- Provide support.

- Listen to some group members.

- Ask students to give every-one a chance to talk (Mahran, 2000: 35)

2.1.7.3. Making too much Noise:

Participating and interacting all students with each other at the same time will probably make a lot of noise. There is definitely more noise in a cooperatively structured classroom. The noise may be recognized as constructive. This noise is not an evidence of lack of control, but it is an evidence of students' engagement in the activity of learning.

2.1.7.4. Some Students Prefer to Work Alone:

Many students especially adults prefer to work alone, because, that is the way they have operated ever since they started going to school. The teacher can help his/her students to see that language is a skill for communicating with people and the more they engage in such face to face communication, the more their verbal communicative competence will improve. When introducing cooperative learning, the teacher should be sure to highlight the advantages of working in groups. The teacher can build an activity that encourages all students to participate (Mahran, 2000: 36).

2.1.8. Cooperative Learning Studies:

There are a lot of studies conducted in the field of cooperative learning and its importance as a way of teaching in general and in the field of teaching EFL. For example, **Bejarano et al. (1997)** presented a study to provide ESL and EFL learners with preparatory training in order to ensure more effective communicative interaction during group work carried out in the language classroom. The objective of this study was to show how training in such strategies improves interaction in small groups. The findings, based on descriptive statistics, indicated that as a result of the training in the skilled use of interaction strategies the experimental group used significantly more Modified-Interaction and Social-Interaction Strategies than the control group. The increased use of interaction strategies improved students' communicative interaction in small groups. This study presented the most important aim of learning English that is interaction to be communicative competence.

In the relationship between cooperative learning (Student Team-Achievement Division) and EFL, **(Ghaith, et al. (1998)** investigated the effect of cooperative learning on the acquisition of English as a second language (ESL) rules and mechanics. Fourth, fifth, and sixth-grade intact classes (n = 318 students) were randomly assigned to experimental and control conditions. The experimental classes received instruction according to the cooperative learning method of Student Teams Achievements Division, whereas the control classes followed an individualistic instructional approach based on exercises in their regular textbooks. Students were pre-tested and post-tested on their knowledge of ESL rules and mechanics. Results indicated that there was no overall significant interaction between participants' aptitude and their subsequent linguistic achievement. Similarly, there was no significant difference between the control and experimental groups on the post-tests that measured content covered during the period of investigation.

Mahran (2000) studied the effect of using a suggested cooperative learning based program on developing some of the composition writing skills of the first year secondary school learning, the purpose of the study was to investigate the effect of using a program that uses the cooperative learning strategies on developing some of the first year secondary school student composition writing skills, The results showed that the program was effective. There were some recommendations:-

- Teachers should be trained systematically in cooperative learning. Access to extensive professional development for teacher to learn and employ cooperative strategies is recommended.
- Courses taught to English majors of faculty of education should offer an authentic background about teaching/learning practices especially cooperative learning.

In the side of benefits of cooperative learning as a suitable way of teaching, **Lie (2000)** presented a study describing the "why" "what" and "how" of using cooperative learning in college teaching. The researcher described some benefits of using cooperative learning in the classroom includes higher achievement, more positive relationships, and better psychological adjustment. The researcher added that to reap these benefits, teachers should be able to distinguish cooperative learning groups from traditional classroom groups and capitalize on using the first one. The researcher views that a cooperative lesson should apply certain basic principles (cooperative management, task structure, individual and group accountability, teachers' and students' roles, and group processing). The researcher developed a wide variety of cooperative learning techniques to improve the effectiveness of group activities. The study discussed some benefits of cooperative learning in the college classes and developed suitable techniques for cooperative learning groups activities.

Goldberg et al. (2001) conducted a study that describes cooperative learning strategies as a way to increase high school and middle school students` motivation for doing well in school, the data indicated that many students did not participate in class regularly but rather came to school to socialize. Research reports that students with poor motivation are often bored in school and have poor relations with their teachers. Cooperative learning was chosen to be the best strategy for intervention following a review of research on strategies to improve student's motivation. The results of the actions taken showed a slight increase in targeted behaviors in students. It was noted that students became less dependent on teacher assistance and more cooperative with each other. This study showed a lot of benefits for cooperative learning

strategy and showed it's effect on creating strong motivation and relationship between students.

Ghaith (2003) studied the effects of the learning together model of cooperative learning on English as a foreign language reading achievement, academic self-esteem, and feelings of school alienation. Fifty-six Lebanese high school learners of EFL participated in the study, and a pretest-posttest control group experimental design was employed. The results indicated no statistically significant differences between the control and experimental groups on the dependent variables of academic self-esteem and feelings of school alienation. However, the results revealed a statistically significant difference in favor of the experimental group on the variable of EFL reading achievement.

Student Team-Achievement Division (STAD) is a suitable strategy in teaching many materials, for example, **Nagib, (2003)** designed a study to investigate the effectiveness of Student Team-Achievement Division (STAD) for teaching science to high school classes in the UAE. The sample was selected randomly. A representative group of UAE high school students was chosen from the Northern Province, which includes urban areas, and from the eastern province, which includes rural areas. The study involved sixteen tenth grade classes. During the second semester of the academic year 1998/1999, three units in the chemistry curriculum were covered. Findings of the study indicated that STAD is a more effective teaching method than traditional teaching methods in teaching 10th grade chemistry classes in the UAE.

The most important benefit of using cooperative learning in teaching EFL is interaction**, McDonough (2004)** conducted a study on the effect of Learner-learner interaction during pair and small group

activities in a Thailand EFL context and examined whether the learning opportunities theoretically attributed to pair and small group activities occurred in an intact classroom. It also investigated whether learners who actively participated during the pair and small group activities showed improved production of the target forms. The results indicated that learners who had more participation during the pair and small group activities demonstrated improved production of the target forms, even though they did not perceive the activities as useful for learning language. The results indicated that learners who had more participation during the pair and small group activities demonstrated improved production of the target forms. This study showed that cooperative learning strategy is a way through which teacher can create a good atmosphere for interaction and discussion between learners in English.

In implementing (Student Teams Achievement Division) strategy in learning EFL**, Ghaith (2004)** investigated the correlates of the implementation of the STAD cooperative learning method in the English as a foreign language classroom. The purpose of the study was to examine the connection between teachers' beliefs concerning the acquisition of knowledge, their behavioral intentions to implement instructional innovations, and their use of the Student Teams Achievement Divisions (STAD) cooperative learning method in their teaching of English as a foreign language (EFL). In addition, the study looked into the role of teaching experience in teachers' use of STAD. Fifty-five EFL teachers from diverse school backgrounds in Lebanon participated in the study. The participants completed a demographic questionnaire and another Likert-type questionnaire that measured the variables under consideration.

The results indicated that teachers' interpretive beliefs, attitudes towards STAD, subjective norms, and perceived degree of behavioral control play a significant role in the use of STAD in EFL teaching. Conversely, the results revealed that teachers' beliefs and experience did not influence their use of STAD in their teaching. The results reported in the study have a number of implications for educators and EFL educational programs interested in including CL, in general, and STAD in particular as an instructional model in the professional development and preparation of teachers.

To examine the effect of cooperative learning strategy (Student Teams Achievement Division) on acquiring EFL, **Liang (2005)** conducted a study to investigate the effects of cooperative learning on EFL learners' acquisition of non-verbal communicative competence in junior high school in Taiwan. A pretest-posttest group research design was used. The sample population of 70 students was from two classes of the first year junior high school students in a rural town in central Taiwan. The experimental group was taught in cooperative learning for one semester with the methods of Three-Step-Interview, Learning Together, Inside-Outside Circle, and Student-Teams-Achievement Division. The control group was taught in the traditional method of Grammar Translation with some of the Audio-Lingual approach. Two oral tasks, one as the pre-test, and the other as the post-test, were designed to measure the participants' non-verbal communicative competence.

The results of the study showed that the experimental group outperformed the control group significantly in the non-verbal aspects of communicative competence. Based on the findings of this study, it seems

appropriate to claim that cooperative learning is a feasible and practical teaching method that puts communicative approach into action. Such a student-centered teaching method helps improve the students' non-verbal skills during communication. 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.

Yang (2005) conducted a study that used cooperative learning strategy (Learning Together) as a way for teaching third-grade learners' information literacy. The study explored the perceptions and attitudes as well as the interactive processes, behavior and patterns of learning information technology via a cooperative approach. The findings of the study were summarized in the following four areas. First, generally speaking, the study showed the positive value of a cooperative approach when effectively integrated into computer curriculums. Second, the study found that group interaction was more procedure-related, including topic choice, duty assignation, content selection, and computer operation. Third, it was found that most learners mastered computer skills, but approached their knowledge-building project with less of a sense of synthesis and integration. Finally, the study found four different forms of interactions (Individual, Authoritative, Argumentative and Consolidated) emerging during the earlier stages of learning with group cohesion increasing at later stages. The first finding of this study showed that cooperative learning is a strategy that gives students a chance to speak and interact.

To investigate the effect of (STAD) in learning EFL, Norman (2005), examined the impact of STAD in a South Korean elementary

school. STAD was used with all grade six classes and was compared to grade five classes which worked in groups lacking the key components of STAD. Both groups completed pretest and posttest surveys which measured changes in exposure to English education outside of the classroom, liking of the English class, attitudes toward working in cooperative learning groups, and changes in academic scores. The results of the study suggested that STAD had significantly positive effects on student achievement and students' attitudes towards learning English. The effect of STAD was greater for achievement than for attitudes toward learning English.

To make a productive group in cooperative learning, **Emmer et al. (2005)** conducted a study in this field, the purpose of the study was to identify how effective teachers manage productive groups in elementary grade classrooms. Multiple instrumental case study methods were used to document the managerial actions of selected teachers who made extensive use of cooperative learning (CL) activities. Analyses revealed several important features of implementing CL, including room arrangement to accommodate group work, organizing activities, teaching students procedures and routines for working in groups, and monitoring group activities. The case studies illustrate how effective teachers established their productive CL settings, and the findings of this study could be helpful to teachers and teacher educators interested in the management of CL activities.

Through review of related literature and studies, the researcher found that there are many studies conducted the field of cooperative learning as away of teaching. But to the knowledge of the researcher there are scarcely studies that conducted the relationship between

cooperative learning and teaching EFL in general, and teaching oral communication skills in specific.

2.2. Oral Communication Skills:

2.2.1. What are Oral Communication Skills?

Oral communication means using the language appropriately in social interactions. Diversity in interaction involves not only verbal communication but also paralinguistic elements of speech such as pitch, stress, and intonation (Shumin, 1997: 8). Also Hismanoglu (2000) gives an example of communication strategies, such as circumlocution, gesturing, paraphrase, or asking for repetition and explanation, all of which are techniques used by learners so as to keep a conversation going. The purpose of using these techniques is to avoid interrupting the flow of communication.

Chen (2005) declares that "in real-life communication, we use language to express what we mean, however, language is more than a tool for communication, it is also represents social and cultural background. Learning merely the target linguistic knowledge cannot successfully engage learners into real-life communications in the target culture, they also need to acquire the target pragmatic competence, the capacity to incorporate cultural knowledge into language use and choose appropriate language in different socio-cultural contexts".

It can be concluded that speaking is the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols. Oral communication skills in EFL include:

- Producing the English speech sounds and sound patterns.

- Using word and sentence stress, intonation patterns and the rhythm of the second language.

- Selecting appropriate words and sentences according to the proper social setting, audience, situation and subject matter.

- Organizing thoughts in a meaningful and logical sequence.

- Using language as a means of expressing values and judgments.

- Using the language quickly and confidently with few unnatural pauses (fluency).

2.2.2. Communicative Competence:

According to Chen (2005) and Park et al. (2006), communicative competence means learners ability to efficiently express what they mean in the target language and successfully achieve communications in real-life situations. Communicative competence is the use of language in social communications without grammatical analysis. Meaning was more important than the structure of language and that the primary goal of language learning should be the development of communicative skills. Hyun (2003) describes communicative competence as the knowledge that users of a language have internalized to enable them to understand and produce messages in the language.

Chomsky defines communicative competence as "part of developing a theory of the linguistic system itself, idealized as the abstract language knowledge of the monolingual adult native speaker, and distinct from how they happen to use and experience language" (Chomsky, 1965). Naoko (2002) defines communicative competence as the ability to understand others' messages and to convey one's message that presenting the view of communication as information exchange. Communicative competence entails socio-cultural knowledge, the ability to interact

politely and to maintain favorable personal relationships. Acar (2005) indicates that the theory of communicative competence has been taken as an aim within the communicative approach, an aim of making a non-native communicatively competent in the target language.

Communicative competence means the learner's ability to use the language in terms of the following competencies:

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              ┌─────────────────────────────┐
              │  Communicative competence   │
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│ Grammatical│ │  Discourse   │ │ Sociolinguistics │ │  Strategic   │
│ competence │ │  competence  │ │    competence    │ │  competence  │
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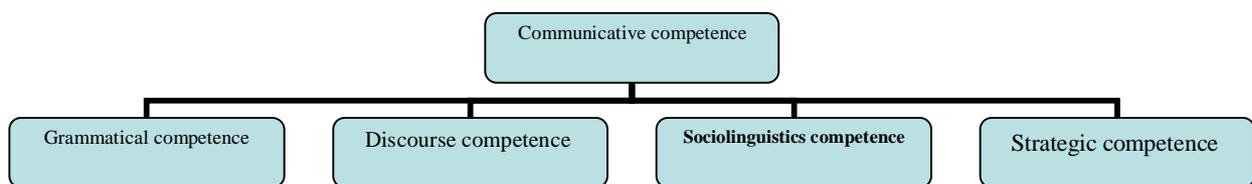
A- Grammatical Competence: Grammatical competence is an umbrella concept that includes increasing expertise in grammar (morphology, syntax), vocabulary, and mechanics. With regards to speaking, the term mechanics refers to basic sounds of letters and syllables, pronunciation of words, intonation, and stress. Grammatical competence enables speakers to use and understand English language structures accurately and unhesitatingly, which contributes to their fluency (Shumin, 1997: 8).

B- Discourse Competence: EFL learners must develop discourse competence which is concerned with relationships. In discourse, whether formal or informal, the rules of cohesion and coherence, which aid in holding the communication together in a meaningful way. In communication, both the production and comprehension of a language require one's ability to perceive and process stretches of discourse (Shumin, 1997: 8). Also Naoko (2002) describes discourse competence as (cohesion and coherence).

C- Sociolinguistic Competence: (Shumin, 1997: 8) views that Knowledge of language alone does not adequately prepare learners for effective and appropriate use of the target language. Learners must have competence which involves knowing what is expected socially and culturally by users of the target language, that is learners must acquire the rules and norms governing the appropriate timing and realization of speech acts. Understanding the sociolinguistic side of language helps learners know what comments are appropriate, know how to ask questions during interaction, and know how to respond nonverbally according to the purpose of the talk. Naoko (2002) defines sociolinguistic competence as the ability to use a language appropriately in different contexts.

D- Strategic Competence: Strategic competence, which is the way learners manipulate language in order to meet communicative goals. Strategic competence refers to the ability to know when and how to take the floor, how to keep a conversation going, how to terminate the conversation, and how to clear up communication breakdown as well as comprehension problems (Shumin, 1997: 8). Also Gilfert et al. (1999: 33-49) describe strategic competence as a social appropriateness and fluency. Naoko (2002) notes that strategic competence is a knowledge of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies.

2.2.3. Oral Interaction and EFL:

According to Counihan (1998), interaction involves the emotions, creativity, agreement, disagreement, people waiting patiently to get in a word, sighing, nodding, gesticulating and so on. Interaction is not waiting to be asked a question. Interaction is not giving a short, one-sentence

answer to this question. Willson (1999) and McDonough (2004: 207-224) define interaction as a process referring to 'face-to-face' action. It can be either verbal, channeled through written or spoken words, or non-verbal, channeled through touch, proximity, eye-contact, facial expressions or gesturing etc. Interaction may facilitate L2 learning by providing learners with negative feedback (information about the ungrammaticality of their utterances), drawing their attention to language form in the context of meaning, and to produce more complex or accurate target language forms.

Being able to interact in a language is essential. Therefore, language instructors should provide learners with opportunities for meaningful communicative behavior about relevant topics by using learner-learner interaction as the key to teach language for communication, because communication derives essentially from interaction (Shumin, 1997: 9).

According to Willson (1999) and Ybarra et al. (2003), teachers are confronted with the challenge of trying to identify which students dominate the interactions in their classroom, why they do and what can be done to encourage the non-participators to interact in a meaningful way. Teachers should offer English language learners a language-rich environment in which students are constantly engaged in language activities. Learners need to be able to interact with each other so that learning through communication can occur. Klancar (2006) proposes that learners in the communicative classroom should get as many speaking opportunities as possible and their speaking time should slowly but steadily rise so as to prepare them for various communicative situations.

Porto (1997: 51) declares that if interaction is the aim, it is necessary to create a suitable atmosphere that would allow students to express themselves freely and make them feel eager to communicate. A teacher- centered classroom would never provide the opportunities for the students to interact. The classroom, thus, must be a non-threatening environment where students are eager to communicate and where the focus is on the process of learning, not on error correction. Errors should be viewed as a natural part of the learning process, never as a drawback. Nunn (2002) determines that diversity in interaction involves not only verbal communication but also paralinguistic elements of speech such as pitch, stress, and intonation. In addition, non-linguistic elements such as gestures and body language/posture, facial expression, and so on may accompany speech or convey messages directly without any accompanying speech.

The selection and design of tasks to practice interactive ability which simulates real-life language use is important to any course that includes the aim of improving ability in spoken interaction. Just as providing interactive tasks can never be sufficient in itself to develop conversational ability, merely following a textbook is unlikely to stimulate small-group interaction. An interactive task should require students to exchange information, opinions, attitudes, but not for its own sake. There should be a real purpose, each participant should need to find something out from the others in order to complete the task Nunn (2002). Interaction among learners lets them expand, and elaborate their ideas in order to convey and/or clarify intended meaning. This interaction is important because it contributes to gains in L2 acquisition (Ghaith, 2003: 452).

Dudgeon, (1998) discusses that students who are in the process of learning English need help to develop their oral skills as a foundation for becoming literate. They need an environment where they can talk not only with their teacher, but also with their peers. Kayi (2006) asserts that many linguistics and ESL teachers agree on that students learn to speak in the second language by "interacting". Communicative language teaching and collaborative learning serve best for this aim. Communicative language teaching is based on real-life situations that require communication. By using this method in ESL classes, students will have the opportunity of communicating with each other in the target language. ESL teachers should create a classroom environment where students have real-life communication, authentic activities, and meaningful tasks that promote oral language. This can occur when students collaborate in groups to achieve a goal or to complete a task.

To conclude, it can be said that there are so many benefits for interaction in EFL such as interaction as a way for improving comprehension and enhancing communicative competence on behalf of students. The learner will be able to correct lexical mistakes by noticing differences between his/her usage and the usage of peers with higher language competence, even when the peers don't provide any explicit feedback. The learner's pragmatic competence improves quickly as he/she successfully adopts his/her peer's useful expressions and phrases.

2.2.4. Accuracy and Fluency:

Two important criteria for successful language teaching are "accuracy" and "fluency". These two issues are controversial and there is no final word on them. Some argue in favor of "fluency" while others insist that "accuracy" should have priority to fluency and a few others

favor both criteria in a reasonable proportion. Brown (2003: 2) defines fluency as "the features which give speech the qualities of being natural and normal, including native-like use of pausing, rhythm, intonation, stress, rate of speaking, and use of interjections and interruptions." In second and foreign language learning, fluency is used to characterize a person's level of communication proficiency, including the following abilities to:

- Produce spoken language easily. [i.e. to talk without awkward pauses for a relatively long time].
- Speak with a good but not necessarily perfect command of intonation, vocabulary, and grammar.
- Communicate ideas effectively.
- Produce continuous speech without causing comprehension difficulties or a breakdown of communication.

Hui (1997: 39) indicates that fluency is an essential requirement for communicative competence. Asato (2003: 28) states that speaking activities often focus on providing opportunities for improving oral fluency. According to Brown (2003: 1), a person is said to be a fluent speaker of a language when he can use its structures accurately whilst concentrating on content rather than form, using the units and patterns automatically at normal conversational speed when they are needed. Sometimes, fluency is defined in contrast to accuracy, "which refers to the ability to produce grammatically correct sentences but may not include the ability to speak or write fluently". Fluency can be understood, not in contrast to accuracy, but rather as a complement to it.

Teachers can promote fluency by doing five things in their classrooms:

- Encouraging students to go ahead and make constructive errors.
- Creating many opportunities for students to practice.
- Creating activities that force students to focus on getting a message across.
- Assessing student's fluency not their accuracy.
- Talking openly to the students about fluency.

Hall (1997: 3); Brown (2003: 1) and Qi (2003) view that one of the most difficult challenges in teaching oral English is finding effective ways to help students improve their discourse fluency. Teachers need to help students to improve not only accuracy but also true communicative abilities. Fluency is not an absolute issue that students either have or do not have. Instead, fluency is a relative issue, even for native speakers who also vary in their fluency. Fluency is a matter of degrees, some degree of fluency can probably be achieved at all levels of language proficiency. According to Omar (2001: 43), accuracy is a condition of being without errors or mistakes. Omar (p.45) adds that to help developing accuracy, we correct student's errors, offer constructive criticism and suggestions, and provide remedial exercises when necessary.

Khalil (2003: 28) points out that "a task-based approach to focus on form is quite visible for the EFL situation. Interactive communicative tasks based on a pair/group participation pattern give learners the opportunity to engage in meaning-focused interaction where they must both comprehend and produce the target language".

2.2.5. How to Develop EFL Oral Communication Skills?

In recent years it has been argued on both linguistic and psychological grounds that spoken language should be the principal objective in language teaching. Porto (1997: 55) and Omar (2001: 34) indicated that developing oral skills is a real challenge for many EFL teachers since the students do not live in an English speaking environment, and it is difficult to find realistic situations which motivate the students to communicate in the foreign language.

According to Haozhang (1997: 33), in order to enhance the speaking competence of our students in the oral communication classroom, language learning must be linked to meaningful language use on the part of the learner in the communicative classroom. The focus of teaching speaking, of course, is to improve the oral production of the students. Therefore, language teaching activities in the classroom should aim at maximizing individual language use. This requires the teacher not only to create a warm and humanistic classroom atmosphere, but also to provide each student with a turn to speak or a role to play.

According to Shumin (1997: 10) and Ybarra, et al. (2003), teachers should offer English language learners a language-rich environment in which students are constantly engaged in language activities. Speech-promotion activities help learners to speak English fluently and appropriately. Kayi (2006) indicates, that today's world requires that the goal of teaching speaking should improve students' communicative skills, because only in that way, students can express themselves and learn how to follow the social and cultural rules appropriate in each communicative circumstance. Teachers should create a classroom environment where students have real-life communication, authentic activities, and

meaningful tasks that promote oral language. This can occur when students collaborate in groups to achieve a goal or to complete a task.

To the researcher, the most important thing that teachers of EFL have to concentrate on in classes is to provide opportunities for every student to participate. Students who are in the process of learning English need help developing their oral skills as a foundation for becoming literate. They need an environment where they can talk not only with their teacher, but also with their peers. It is important to give students opportunities to use verbal language for different purposes and situations. Dudgeon (1998) and Klancar (2006) emphasize that learners in the communicative classroom should get as many speaking opportunities as possible. Keeping in mind that each classroom offers a wide range of learners differing in their abilities, knowledge, confidence, motivation and learning styles, a teacher should provide them with a proper environment that would help them to develop their skills, independent of their basic characteristics and diversity. McDonough (2004: 212) stated that producing language may facilitate acquisition by creating opportunities for learners to notice interlanguage and target language forms.

2.2.6. Studies Related to the Oral Communication Skills:

Some studies on oral communication skills in EFL include **Nazir (1989)** who tested the effect of using a suggested program to develop verbal communication of prospective teachers of English, Faculty of Education Assiut University. The purpose of the study was to develop verbal communication among prospective teachers of English, The results of the study indicated that the program was effective and successful. The researcher recommended that:

- The teacher of English has to use communicative activities and procedures that should become a part of the teaching syllabuses, and not just time filler.
- Students have to be provided with opportunities to participate in the language class through pair work, group work, team work, and class work.

Mahmoud (1991) developed a suggested program for developing the speaking skills among prospective teachers of English at the Faculty of Education, Assuit University. The study was mainly intended to assess the spoken English proficiency of fourth year students, English Department, Faculty of Education, in Qena. The study developed and implemented a speaking training program of a carefully selected variety of communicative activities based on some principles of Krashen`s second language acquisition theory to measure the effectiveness of employing this program with a group of students.

The results of the study confirmed that the actual student-teacher's spoken English proficiency was low. Findings also showed that the subjects made success during the experiment. Their mean scores on the post-test were higher than their scores on the pre-test. This is an indication that the treatment was effective and that the program improved spoken proficiency. Besides, the results revealed that the vast majority of students had a positive attitude towards the program. The findings of the study indicated that speaking skills could be developed mostly through interaction and groups activities.

There are many strategies through which oral communication skills in EFL can be developed. **Gilfert et al. (1997)** conducted a study to

develop effective communication strategies for non-English majors in Japanese universities. The study discussed three concepts: cooperative learning, communicative learning, and communicative competence, that English classes should center upon, and offered a classroom technique based on these concepts that would be a practical solution to this dilemma. Students worked in English to their own level of interest and ability in a learner-centered classroom. Communication strategies were practiced and reinforced. The language used in class was meaningful and communicative. The study indicated that teachers and students alike generally enjoyed and learned from this technique. It solves the problem of how to work with a very large class, and allows the teacher to interact with individual students.

There are many linguistic and cognitive factors that affect EFL learners` oral fluency. **Ibrahim (2000)** conducted a study of some linguistic and cognitive factors that affect the oral fluency of first year students, English section, Faculty of Education, Assuit University and suggested some remedial activities. The objective of the study was to investigate some linguistic and cognitive factors affecting first year EFL learner's oral fluency. The researcher developed and used six different tools to test the relationship between EFL learners` linguistic and cognitive factors and their oral fluency in English. The study showed the following results:-

1- There is a significant correlation between EFL learners` linguistic competence and their oral fluency level.

2- There is a positive relationship between EFL learners` cognitive factors and their oral fluency level.

3- There is a high significant correlation between each factors and its group of factors.

4-	There is also a significant correlation between each component of the linguistic and cognitive competence and the oral fluency variable. The study showed a theoretical background about oral fluency in English and declared some tools that may develop oral fluency in English.

To develop communicative skills, **Khalil (2003)** conducted a study to examine the effect of using a suggested program to develop English majors` ability to use some grammar skills communicatively, at Faculty of Education, Assuit University, the objectives of the study were to identify the students` level of proficiency in using some grammar skills, and to improve their ability to use some grammar skills, correctly and appropriately through a communicatively-based program designed for this purpose. The results of the study indicated that the suggested program was effective in developing the subjects` ability to use the grammar skills under study correctly and appropriately. This study presented a theoretical background about the communication skills, and followed valuable steps in building the suggested program.

For the purpose of developing verbal communication during cooperative learning, **Gillies (2004)** examined the effects of communication training on teachers' and students' verbal behaviors during cooperative learning **,** this study sought to compare the effects of training teachers in specific communication skills designed to promote thinking and scaffold learning on teachers' and students' verbal behaviors during cooperative group work. The results showed that when teachers are trained to use specific communication skills during cooperative learning (cooperative-interactional condition) they engage in more mediated-learning interactions, ask more questions, and make

fewer disciplinary comments than teachers who have been trained to implement cooperative group work only (cooperative condition). In turn, the students in the cooperative-interactional groups modeled many of the responses they gave their teachers and provided more detailed explanations, shorter responses, and asked more questions than their peers in the cooperative only groups.

Chappell (2004) presented a study that provides an outline of a cycle for the teaching and learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) oral skills, taking whole texts, or complete stretches of discourse, as the point of departure. After a discussion of the constructs of the nature of language and learning, a teaching/learning cycle is outlined. Following this, a practical application of the cycle is detailed, with data taken from a lower-intermediate adult EFL classroom lesson in a language centre for adults in Bangkok, Thailand. The observations from this data revealed several positive outcomes from using the teaching/learning cycle, as well as several areas that would benefit from a more in-depth level of inquiry. This study showed a reasonable theoretical background of the oral communication skills in EFL, and how they can be taught to learners.

To develop English majors` oral communication skills, **Sayed (2005)** examined the effect of using a multiple intelligences–based training program on developing English majors` oral communication skills, at Faculty of Education, Assuit University. The purpose of the study was to investigate the effect of using a multiple intelligences-based training program on developing first year English majors` oral communication skills. The results of the study revealed that the program had a great effect on the students` oral communication skills and there are statistically significant differences between the pre and post

administration of the test. The study presented a suitable theoretical background about oral communication skills, and indicated that oral communication skills could be developed through a suitable built program.

2.2.6. Conclusion

Having reviewed some related studies, the researcher can draw the following conclusion:

1- The previous studies proved the success of cooperative learning strategies in learning EFL process and recommended it as a suitable strategy and approach of instruction.

2- The previous studies proved that cooperative learning strategy STAD is very flexible and can be applied with many subjects and materials. This depends on the objectives of whoever wants to apply it and the field in which he/she wants to apply it.

3- Some studies have been conducted to test the effectiveness of cooperative learning strategy as a way of EFL teaching-learning such as, (Bejarano et al. 1997; Ghaith, et al. 1998; Mahran, 2000; Ghaith, 2003; Nagib, 2003; McDonough, 2004; Liang, 2005 and Norman, 2005). And all of them proved its effectiveness and positive influence on the learning of EFL.

4- Some studies proved the effectiveness of the cooperative learning strategy in developing many academic skills, such as social skills, cooperation, respecting other, and communication with other.

5- Some studies proved that oral communication skills in EFL can be developed through giving learners opportunities to talk, to interact, to participate, and to feel less anxious and more confident.

Finally, the researcher found that there are many studies conducted on the field of oral communication skills in EFL and how to develop them. But to the knowledge of the researcher there is a scarcely of studies conducted to develop oral communication skills in EFL through cooperative learning as a good and suitable strategy that lets students develop their oral communication skills in EFL.

Chapter Three

Materials and Methods

3.1. The Purpose of the Study:

The main purpose of the present study was to investigate the effect of using a cooperative learning program on developing some oral communication skills of the second level students at English Department, Faculty of Education, Sana'a University.

3.2. The Experimental Design:

The group of the study (No. 30) had never received any systematic training in the cooperative learning strategy (STAD) prior to this study. The experiment of the study took place during the first semester of the academic year 2007\2008, it lasted for six weeks. In the first week, students were interviewed [pre-testing]. Each unit was taught in a weak, each unit consists of four lessons, but two lessons of each unit were taught (because of the limited time) and each lesson was taught during one lecture (session) which lasted for two hours.

The present study followed the one pre-post experimental group design in which only one experimental group was used in the implementation process. This experimental group was exposed to an oral communication pre-post test and a training program which was based on cooperative learning strategy (STAD) for the purpose of developing some oral communication skills.

3.3. Group of the Study:

Since the main aim of this study was to develop second level students' oral communication skills in English language, the group under

investigation was derived from second level students in the English department, Faculty of Education, Sana'a University. Thirty students (7 males and 23 females) participated in the study voluntarily (random selection was not easy especially as the researcher was not a regular class teacher).

There were many reasons for choosing the group of the study from second level students: First, those students needed to be familiarized with important oral communication skills. Second, as future English language teacher, they needed to develop and master oral skills as desirable goals of the educational process. Third, after this level students do not usually study any material related to oral work. Fourth, second level students got the basic skills to be able to communicate in English. Fifth, the training program was prepared for those particular students.

The group of the study were graduates of the public schools in Yemen who had studied English as a foreign language for seven years: Three years at the prep school, three years at the secondary school, and one year at the first level in English Department, Faculty of Education. Also they were homogenous in terms of their academic level in English language. This was reflected by students' scores that they got at the end of the first level. Their scores were homogenous for all achievement levels of pass, good, very good, and excellent.

The experimental group of the study was given a general idea about the importance of developing oral communication skills as prospective teachers of English language, and to be fluent in English language. Also they were given a general idea about the program and its importance.

3.4. Variables of the Study:

3.4.1. The Independent Variable: The cooperative learning strategy STAD-based training program.

3.4.2. The Dependent Variable: Oral communication skills of the second level students.

3.5. Oral Communication Skills:

To answer the first question of the study, "What are the oral communication skills that are necessary for the second level students, at the English Department, Faculty of Education, Sana'a University". It was necessary to determine the main oral communication skills that the second level students needed to develop.

A list of (20) oral communication skills was chosen based on a review of literature, a review of the study courses at English Department, Faculty of Education, Sana'a University and the views of some EFL faculties from Sana'a and Assiut universities. This list was submitted to a panel of jury members of 15 specialists in (TEFL) and linguistic to determine the most important oral communication skills that second level students needed to develop (see appendix (1). p.101).

The following skills were the ones with the highest obtained frequency:

A- Giving and Eliciting Information,

b- Giving Oral Presentation,

c- Explanation,

d- Expressing Opinions and Attitudes,

e- Talking about the Future.

3.6. Tools and Materials of the Study:

The researcher developed and administered the following two tools:

a- A pre- post oral communication skills test,

b- A cooperative learning strategy STAD-based program.

3.6.1. The Oral Communication Pre-Post Test:

The researcher organized a pre-post test in order to answer the second question of the study "How far is the program effective on developing the oral communication skills of the second level students, at the English Department, Faculty of Education, Sana'a University. The test was in the form of an interview, this was used because of its suitability to the nature of the oral communication skills. Besides, each student needed to be interviewed individually to take his/her time to talk freely with the interviewer (see appendix (2) p.103).

3.6.1.1. Objective of the Test:

The pre-post test was constructed by the researcher, it was used to identify the students' performance in the oral communication skills before being exposed to the program, and to evaluate the effectiveness of the suggested program in developing the subjects' oral communication skills.

3.6.1.2. Construction of the Test:

The test included five sections (see appendix (2) p.108) each section is devoted to test one of the five oral communication skills.

Section 1: Giving and Eliciting Information,

Section 2: Giving Oral Presentation,

Section 3: Explanation,

Section 4: Expressing Opinions and Attitudes,

Section 5: Talking about the Future.

3.6.1.3. Pre-Testing:

Students were pre-tested for 5 days before the training program to determine each student's actual performance level in the five oral communication skills before training for purposes of post treatment comparisons.

3.6.1.4. Validity of the Test:

To determine the validity of the test for assessing the oral communication skills of the second level students, it was submitted to a jury of professionals (see appendix (5) p.227). In the light of their suggestions, some items were modified or substituted and others were deleted. The jury members agreed that the final form of the test was generally valid.

3.6.1.5. Reliability of the Test:

Using the SPSS program (Cronbach's Alpha), the reliability of the test was computed and proved to be reliable at (0.74) and significant at (0.01).

3.6.1.6. Scoring the Test:

The total scores of the test were 25. Each section is scored using (rating scale of performance) (see appendix (2) p.107). To each section the individual student was giving from (0) to (5) marks according to his/her performance.

3.6.2. The Cooperative Learning Strategy STAD-Based Program:

The program was constructed and taught by the researcher.

3.6.2.1. The Aim of the Program:

The suggested program was designed with the main aim of developing second level students' oral communication skills. This main aim was divided into some specific objectives that were expected to be achieved throughout the units and lessons of the program.

3.6.2.2. The Frame of the Program:

Based on general objective of the program and the suggested five oral communication skills, a suggested frame of the program was prepared. It included the following. The general objectives of each of the five units of the program, the behavioral objectives, the content areas, the teaching methods and techniques, and finally the evaluation techniques that should be used to assess students' performance (see appendix (3) p.109). The frame of the program was submitted to a jury of professionals to judge its validity as for the following:

- Suitability of the topics for the general objectives and behavioral objectives.

- Relevance of the behavioral objectives to the general objectives.

- Appropriateness of the activities and procedures to achieve the behavioral objectives.

The jury members agreed on the validity of the frame of the program.

3.6.2.3. Construction of the Program:

The training program consisted of a teachers' guide (see appendix (4) P.115) and a students' handbook (see appendix (4) P.175). The program was designed according to the cooperative learning strategy

(STAD) which was chosen to be most closely related to oral communication skills and most suitable strategy that gives all students a chance to talk and participate in the class.

Having reviewed literature, the researcher was able to design the program following these procedures:

- Identifying the oral communication skills needed by the second level students.

- Choosing five oral communication skills.

- Choosing the most appropriate strategy (STAD).

- Determining the general and behavioral objectives of the program.

- Building the frame of the program and judging it.

- Building the whole program, teachers' guide, and students' handbook.

- Judging the program.

The program in its final form is outlined as follows:

Unit one: Giving and Eliciting Information —"cooperative learning and oral communication skills in EFL" (this unit as an introduction and orientation). It consists of four lessons:

Lesson one: Cooperative Learning.

Lesson two: Cooperative Learning and Teaching.

Lesson three: Oral Communication in EFL.

Lesson four: Important Points Related to Oral Communication Skills.

Unit two: Giving Oral Presentation (Four lessons):

Lesson one: Unemployment and (some notes about how to give an oral presentation).

Lesson two: Literature.

Lesson three: The Internet and (some notes about delivering an oral presentation).

Lesson four: Women's Work.

Unit three: Explanation (Four lessons):

Lesson one: Is Money Everything?

Lesson two: Chewing Qat.

Lesson three: Educational System in Yemen.

Lesson four: The Elections.

Unit four: Expressing Opinions and Attitudes (Four lessons):

Lesson one: Terrorism and (some notes about how to express opinions).

Lesson two: Political Hour.

Lesson three: Friendship.

Lesson four: Early Marriage.

Unit five: Talking about the Future (Four lessons):

Lesson one: Iraq.

Lesson two: If you were the President?

Lesson three: If you were the Richest One in the World?

Lesson four: After Graduation.

3.6.2.4. Validity of the Program:

To establish the validity of the program, it was administered to a panel of staff members specialized in TEFL (see appendix (5) P.227). They were required to give their points of view with regard to:

- The suitability of the program to the group of the study.

- Suitability of the topics for the general and behavioral objectives.

- Relevance of the behavioral objectives to the general objectives.

- Suitability of the activities and procedures to achieve the behavioral objectives. Members of the jury affirmed that the program was valid for training the group of the study. The program was modified in the light of the jury's comments and suggestions.

3.6.2.5. Piloting the Program:

In order to ensure the validity of the program content with the second level students and adjust the timing for tasks and activities, some sample activities were randomly selected and taught to 15 students who were randomly selected from the second level. During the pilot study, the researcher noticed the following:

- Some students were somewhat hesitant and shy at the beginning either inside the group during the discussion or to stand in front of all students, therefore, the researcher motivated them to participate and talk freely. The researcher modified the content of the program in the light of the pilot study as follows:

- Some instructions were modified or removed, and others were added to facilitate students' understanding.

- Some procedures were modified and/or rearranged so as to be more appropriate to the students.

3.6.2.6. Teaching the Program:

The researcher followed the steps that were consistent with the (STAD) strategy as follows:

- Preparing a suitable topic for each session,

- Preparing the room to be suitable for groups sessions,

- Telling students something about the title of the topic,

- Dividing students to groups of 4 or 5 students each (using different ways of dividing),

- Asking students in each group to assign roles for each member in the group, clarifying the tasks they are going to do (Leader, Reporter, Writer, Facilitator or Timer),

- Giving students clear and direct instructions to assure that all students

understood what they were going to do,

- Asking students to read the short text that was written in their handbooks,

- Asking students to think individually and to write notes to be used during discussion within the group (Remind students that written notes are just for reminding the speaker, not for reading),

- Asking students to start discussion about the written points,

- Tolerating the constructive noise that the students make during discussion in groups,

- Giving students enough time to communicate, because the most important thing is to let them talk as much as possible,

- Going around the groups to check, guide, encourage, assess and help,

- Using the Rating Scale of group performance (see appendix (4) p.118), to evaluate the groups' performance in each session,

- Participating with some groups discussions,

- Encouraging students to work cooperatively and giving them enough time to talk,

- Asking groups to summarize the discussion by choosing one of them (the reporter) to come out to deliver the summary of the discussion orally in front of all students,

- Writing notes during the reporter presentation about the positive, negative things, and the big errors if there are,

- Giving students a chance to add comments or make suggestions for the next session.

3.6.2.7. Evaluation of the Program:

- The researcher prepared and used a Rating Scale of group performance (see appendix (4) p.118), to evaluate the groups performance in each session.

- The researcher prepared some suitable questions to be asked after each session (see appendix (4) p.117).

3.7. The Teacher's Role:

The researcher taught the program himself. His role was that of a guider, a facilitator, a friend, a manager, a monitor, a social worker, helper, assessor, and a model for the students. These are the roles that are consistent with the (STAD) strategy environment in which students are supposed to feel relaxed and motivated to talk and have discussion with each other. The teacher did not dominate the teaching-learning situation and he gave all students the best chance to express themselves freely in English.

3.8. The Students' Role:

Students participated actively in the group discussion by giving as many ideas as they could and they also participated in giving a summary of the discussion in front of all students orally.

- They participated in preparing the room,

- Assigned roles for each member in the group (Leader, Reporter, Writer, Facilitator or Timer),

- They thought individually to write notes to be used during the group discussion,

- They encouraged, helped and advised each other,

- They discussed any points or questions communicatively,

- They followed the teacher's instructions to perform tasks,

- They worked in groups cooperatively,

- They participated in presenting the summary of the discussion in front of all students at the end of the group discussion.

Chapter Four

Results and Discussions

4.1. Testing the Validity of Research Hypotheses:

4.1.1. The First Hypothesis:

The first hypothesis of the present study was "There would be statistically significant difference in the mean scores of the research group in the pre and post administration in overall oral communication skills favoring the post one".

To test the validity of this hypothesis, a paired t-test "SPSS" program was used to compare the students' total mean scores on the pre-post test.

Table (1) Presents t-test results of the obtained data for overall pre-post test comparison of the study group

Group	No of Ss	Test	Mean	SD	T-value	DF	Sig.
Exper.	30	Pre.	12.4000	3.00115	14.779	29	.000
		Post.	16.8667	2.16131			

Table (1) states that there is a high significant difference between the mean scores of the pre and post administration of the test in favor of the post one as the t-value (14.779) was significant at the (0,000) level. These results assure that the program was effective in developing oral communication skills of the research group. The first hypothesis is accepted.

4.1.2. The Second Hypothesis:

The second hypothesis of the present study was "There would be statistically significant difference in the mean scores of the research group in the pre and post administration in each oral communication skills favoring the post one".

Table (2) Presents t-test results of the obtained data for pre-post test comparison of the study group in section 1 (Giving and eliciting information)

Group	No of Ss	Test	Mean	SD	T-value	DF	Sig.
Exper.	30	Pre.	2.3667	1.03335	7.374	29	.000
		Post.	3.3667	.80872			

Table (2) shows that there is a high significant difference between the mean scores of the pre and post administration in favor of the post one, in the first section (Giving and Eliciting Information), as the t-value (7.374) was significant at the (0,000) level. These gains assure that the program was an effective on developing oral communication skills of the experimental group.

Table (3) Presents t-test results of the obtained data for pre-post test comparison of the study group in section 2 (Giving oral presentation)

Group	No of Ss	Test	Mean	SD	T-value	DF	Sig.
Exper.	30	Pre.	2.2667	.78492	6.158	29	.000
		Post.	3.4000	.81368			

Table (3) shows that there is a high significant difference between the mean scores of the pre and post administration in favor of the post one, in the second section (Giving Oral Presentation), as the t-value (6.158) was significant at the (0,000) level. These gains assure that the program was an effective on developing oral communication skills of the experimental group.

Table (4) Presents t-test results of the obtained data for pre-post test comparison of the study group in section 3 (Explanation)

Group	No of Ss	Test	Mean	SD	T-value	DF	Sig.
Exper.	30	Pre.	2.5333	.97320	5.764	29	.000
		Post.	3.4000	.72397			

Table (4) states that there is a high significant difference between the mean scores of the pre and post administration in favor of the post one, in the third section (Explanation), as the t-value (5.764) was significant at the (0,000) level. These gains assure that the program was an effective on developing oral communication skills of the experimental group.

Table (5) Presents t-test results of the obtained data for pre-post test comparison of the study group in section 4 (Expressing opinions and attitudes)

Group	No of Ss	Test	Mean	SD	T-value	DF	Sig.

Exper.	30	Pre.	2.5000	.77682	6.496	29	.000
		Post.	3.4000	.62146			

Table (5) states that there is a high significant difference between the mean scores of the pre and post administration in favor of the post one, in the fourth section (Expressing Opinions and Attitudes), as the t-value (6.496) was significant at the (0,000) level. These gains assure that the program was an effective on developing oral communication skills of the experimental group.

Table (6) Presents t-test results of the obtained data for pre-post test comparison of the study group in section 5 (Talking about the future)

Group	No of Ss	Test	Mean	SD	T-value	DF	Sig.
Exper.	30	Pre.	2.7333	.86834	3.798	29	.001
		Post.	3.3000	.74971			

Table (6) shows, that there is a high significant difference between the mean scores of the pre and post administration in favor of the post one, in the fifth section (Talking about the Future), as the t-value (3.798) was significant (0,001) level. These gains assure that the program was an effective on developing oral communication skills of the experimental group.

Going through Tables (2, 3, 4, 5, and 6) of the analysis of the obtained data in the pre-post test performance of the study group it becomes clear that the suggested program is effective and leads to

accepting the second hypothesis.

The following chart states the difference between the pre and post administrations in each section and overall the test.
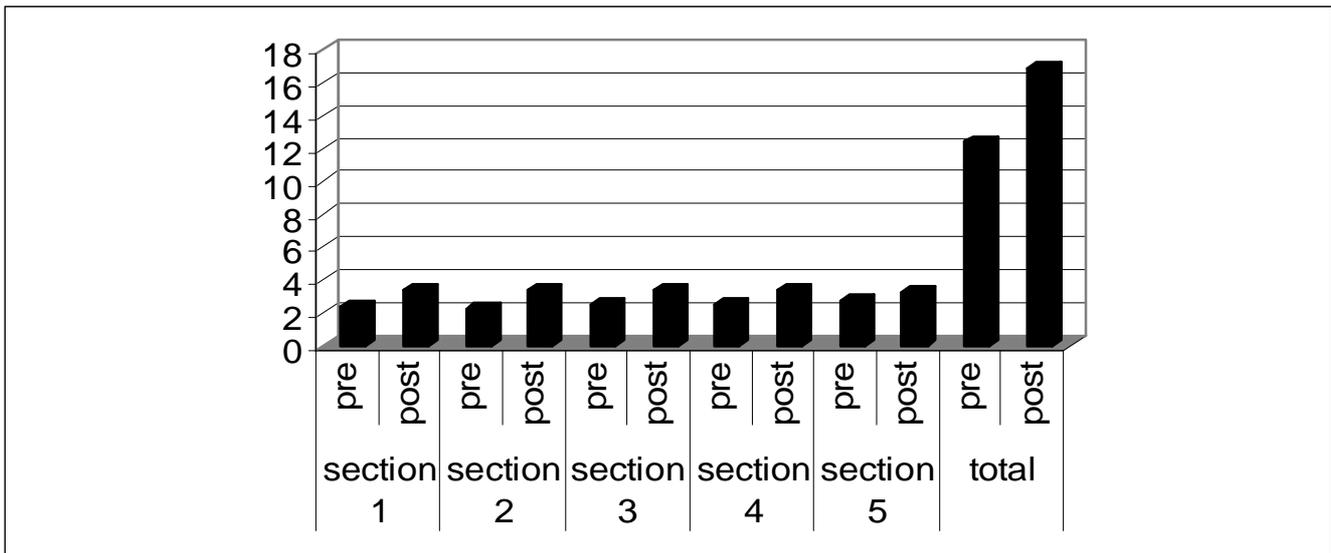
The difference between the pre and post administrations in each section and overall the test

4.2. Discussion:

The main purpose of the present study was to investigate the effect of a program based on cooperative learning strategy (STAD) on developing some oral communication skills of the second level students, in English Department, Faculty of Education, Sana'a University.

The results of the study proved that there is statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the research group in each of the pre and post test administration. The results indicated that the cooperative learning strategy STAD-based program helped to develop some of the English majors' oral communication skills, because the activities encouraged students to interact freely and communicatively

using the target language. This result is consistent with many studies conducted by: Nazir (1989); Bejarano et al. (1997); Shumin (1997); Ghaith, et al. (1998); Mahran (2000); Goldberg et al. (2001); Ghaith (2003); Abdullah (2004); McDonough (2004), and Yang (2005).

During cooperative learning group discussion it was noticed that there was an active involvement, interaction, cooperation, and participation between students where language was used and where real learning could take place. Students become more serious, responsive and active. The participation in the activities of the tasks included in the program lets all students use the language for self-expression and communication. The program contained attractive topics such as, (Unemployment, Literature, The Internet, Women's Work, Is Money Everything?, Chewing Qat, Educational System in Yemen, The Election, Terrorism, Political hour, Friendship, Early Marriage, Iraq, If you were the President?, If you were the Richest One in the World? And After Graduation) all this topics create a lot of discussions, arguments and motivate students to participate, comment, agree, disagree, add, ask, answer, or say their point of view.

Cooperative learning activities in the program were effective at increasing the leadership skill and enhance students' self esteem through assigning roles for each member in the group to be responsible of his role, which in turn motivate students to participate in the learning process. Students help each other to build a supportive community which raises the performance level of each member, this leads to higher self-esteem in all students. Cooperative learning strategy have proven effective in increasing motivation for learning, fostering positive feelings toward classmates, and increasing performance on learning,

reasoning, and problem solving. The results of the study are generally indicative that cooperative learning promotes an academically and personally supportive classroom climate as well as maximizes positive interdependence and achievement among learners.

Cooperative learning strategy STAD-based activities in this study have helped students to be more exposed to the English language and to use it in achieving real communication purposes. Students were more free and interactive during the group discussions as the researcher provided them with the proper relaxing atmosphere that might have helped them to improve their oral performance and gain new communication experiences. Activities in a group helped students to organize, manage, be responsible, be active, participate, making suggestions, summarize, elaborate, explain and defend. This result is consistent with some studies such as: Slavin (1977); Nichols (1996); Nagib (2003); Ghaith (2004); Norman (2005) and Liang (2005).

Being exposed to the training program has helped students to improve their performance during the post administration of the oral communication test. While the researcher was teaching the program, he noticed that students began to speak more fluently, accurately, and freely. Similarly, the researcher noticed an improved performance in the students' oral communication skills during the post administration of the oral communication test compared with their performance in the pre administration of the same test.

4.3. Conclusion:

After ending the experiment of the study and analyzing the results, the cooperative learning strategy STAD-based program proved to be

effective in developing the students' oral communication skills for many reasons:

1- It gave all students more chances to use the English language communicatively, promoted a positive attitude toward English language learning and higher achievement.

2- It provided students with the relaxing positive teaching/learning environment, positive self-esteem, responsibility for learning and more positive heterogeneous relationships which helped them to develop oral communication skills.

3- It made students active most of the time through the practical communicative tasks, that they were asked to perform. It promoted involved and exploratory learning.

4- It encouraged diversity in understanding, how to criticize ideas not people and enhancing self management skills.

5- It connected students with their own personal life experiences, and thus, made learning more realistic to them.

4.4. Recommendations:

In the light of the results and conclusions of the present study, the following recommendations are suggested:

1- Cooperative learning strategies should be used in teaching (speaking) in the different educational stages to enhance students' abilities in oral communication.

2- Changing the role of the teacher from being the main source of teaching process to that of facilitating, guiding, managing and encouraging.

3- Students of Faculties of Education should be trained systematically in how to use cooperative learning strategies in teaching English as a foreign language.

4- Teacher of English should use cooperative learning strategy in his/her daily teaching to add variety and avoid the monotony of teaching.

5- Teachers of English should develop their students' oral communication skills by giving them enough time to interact with each other freely.

6- During teaching of speaking or oral communication, students should be provided with a relaxing, effective, and interactive environment that fosters interaction and helps to develop the students' oral communication skills.

4.5. Suggestions for Further Research:

In the light of the present study results, more studies are suggested in the area of using cooperative learning strategies in teaching English as a foreign language:

1- The present study should be replicated on a large scale and over a long period of time (three months or more) in order to further test its hypotheses.

2- Investigating the effect/effectiveness of the cooperative learning strategy (STAD) programs with first, third, and fourth level students to develop their English language proficiency.

3- Investigating the effect/effectiveness of using other cooperative learning strategies in the field of (TEFL).

4- Investigating the effect/effectiveness of using cooperative learning strategy (STAD) to teach English as a foreign language to the primary and secondary stages.

5- Investigating the effect/effectiveness of using cooperative learning strategies to develop reading, writing, and listening skills for the English majors at the Faculties of Education.

6- Investigating the effect/effectiveness of using cooperative

learning strategies on the students' attitudes toward English as a foreign language.

Chapter Five

Summary of the Study

5.1. Introduction:

In a cooperative learning approach students and teachers are in a state of dynamic interaction in the classroom. When students interact in cooperative groups, they learn to give and receive information, develop new understandings and perspectives, and communicate in a socially acceptable manner. It is through interacting with each other in reciprocal dialogues that students learn to use language differently to explain new experiences and new realities.

5.2. Problem of the Study:

In the Department of English, Faculty of Education, Sana'a University students are supposed to be able to communicate with each other inside and outside the classroom after being trained in the four language skills. Yet they have little or no opportunity to use the language orally. In fact, they are given training in reading, writing, and listening skills, but speaking or oral communication is neglected.

Conversational English is rarely heard by the students in the Department of English, Faculty of Education, Sana'a University. It has been confirmed by lecturers who teach oral communication skills to the second level students, that the students have many problems in this field, most of the graduates are poor in oral communication skills. Therefore, the research tried to investigate the effect of using a program based on cooperative learning strategy (STAD) on developing some oral communication skills of second level students, Faculty of Education, Sana'a University.

5.3. The Purpose of the Study:

The purpose of the study was to investigate the effect of a program based on cooperative learning strategy (STAD) on developing some oral communication skills of the second level students, at English Department, Faculty of Education, Sana'a University.

5.4. Questions of the Study:

The present study attempted to answer the following question:

What is the effect of a program based on cooperative learning strategy (STAD) on developing some oral communication skills of the second level students, in the English Department, Faculty of Education, Sana'a University.

This main question was divided into two sub-questions:

1. What are the oral communication skills that are necessary for the second level students, in the English Department, Faculty of Education, Sana'a University.

2. How far is the program effective on developing the oral communication skills of the second level students, in the English Department, Faculty of Education, Sana'a University.

5.5. Hypotheses of the Study:

1- There would be statistically significant difference in the mean scores of the research group in the pre and post administration in overall oral communication skills favoring the post one.

2- There would be statistically significant difference in the mean scores of the research group in the pre and post administration in each oral communication skills favoring the post one.

5.6. Tools and Materials of the Study:

The researcher developed and used the following two tools:

1- A pre-post oral communication test (prepared by researcher).
2- A cooperative learning strategy STAD-based program, contains a teacher's guide and a students' handbook (prepared by researcher).

5.7. Limitations of the Study:

The study was limited to the following:

1- Second level students, at the English Department, Faculty of Education, Sana'a University. In this level students are supposed to have acquired a basic ground of skills to be able to participate in the cooperative learning groups.

2- Some of the oral communication skills, chosen by jury members, since oral communication contains many skills that is difficult to be reached in a study.

A- Giving and Eliciting Information.

B- Giving Oral Presentation.

C- Explanation.

D- Expressing Opinions and Attitudes.

E- Talking about the Future.

3- The suggested program based on (Students Team Achievement Division) "STAD" a kind of cooperative learning strategy.

5.8. Procedures of the Study:

The following procedures were followed in conducting the present study:

1. Reviewing related literature and previous studies to write the theoretical background of the study.

2. Identify some of the oral communication skills that second level students need to develop, administering the list to jury members,

then modifying it in the light of their comments, and choosing the five oral communication skills with the highest frequency.

3. Designing a frame of the program, administering it to jury members and then modifying it in the light of their comments.

4. Designing oral communication pre-post test, administering it to jury members, and then making any necessary modifications in the light of their comments.

5. Selecting the group of the study (30 students) from among second level students, English Department, Faculty of Education, Sana'a University.

6. Pre-testing the group of the study.

7. Teaching the program to the group of the study.

8. Post-testing the group of the study.

9. Analyzing, discussing the results and offering suggestions and recommendations.

5.9. Results of the Study:

The results of the study proved that there is statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the research group in each of the pre and post test administration. The results indicated that the cooperative learning strategy STAD-based program helped to develop some of the English majors' oral communication skills in English, because the activities encouraged students to interact freely and communicatively using the target language.

5.10. Recommendations:

In the light of the results and conclusions of the present study, the following recommendations are suggested:

1- Cooperative learning strategies should be used in teaching speaking in

the different educational stages to enhance students' abilities in oral communication.

2- Changing the role of the teacher from being the main source of teaching process to that of facilitating, guiding, managing and encouraging.

3- Students of Faculties of Education should be trained systematically in how to use cooperative learning strategies in teaching English as a foreign language.

4- The teacher of English should use cooperative learning strategy in his/her daily teaching to add variety and avoid the monotony of teaching.

5- Teachers of English should develop their students' oral communication skills by giving them enough time to interact with each other freely.

6- During the teaching of speaking or oral communication, students should be provided with a relaxing, effective, and interactive environment that fosters interaction and helps to develop the students' oral communication skills.

5.11. Suggestions for Further Research:

In the light of the present study results, more studies are suggested in the area of using cooperative learning strategies in teaching English as a foreign language:

1- The present study should be replicated on a large scale and over a long period of time (Three months or more) in order to further test its hypotheses.

2- Investigating the effect/effectiveness of the cooperative learning strategy (STAD) programs with first, third, and fourth level students to develop their English language proficiency.

3- Investigating the effect/effectiveness of using other cooperative

learning strategies in the field of (TEFL).

4- Investigating the effect/effectiveness of using cooperative learning strategy (STAD) to teach English as a foreign language to the primary and secondary stages.

5- Investigating the effect/effectiveness of using cooperative learning strategies to develop reading, writing, and listening skills for the English majors at the Faculties of Education.

6- Investigating the effect/effectiveness of using cooperative learning strategies on the students' attitudes toward English as a foreign language.

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