

The Impact of Cooperative Training of EFL Student Teachers on their Teaching Performance and Attitude toward Teaching

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Abstract

Iraqi EFL college instructors, who supervise the teaching practice of EFL student teachers, commonly experience the inefficient teaching performance of prospective teachers. This inefficiency is usually due to their inability to make connections between the practical experience and the theoretical knowledge of TEFL. One of the reasons behind this inability may be the employment of traditional ways of training and instructing student teachers. Moreover, it is usually noticed that many Iraqi EFL student teachers have a negative attitude toward the teaching profession. They explicitly state that they would join the teaching force only if they fail to work in any other field.

The issue of developing EFL student teachers preparation by providing effective training strategy to prepare teachers to teach in more challenging ways is the main concern of this experimental study in which two groups are involved (experimental and control). It aims at finding out the effect of employing a cooperative learning strategy in training EFL student teachers on developing their teaching performance as well as their attitude toward teaching.

To achieve the aims of this study, a classroom observation checklist and a questionnaire are constructed to evaluate student teachers' teaching performance and attitude toward teaching. In addition, a set of lesson plans are designed to be followed with the experimental group. The experiment lasts for 14 weeks at the end of which the study instruments are administered.

The findings of the study shows that employing the cooperative learning strategy in training Iraqi EFL student teachers is effective in enabling them

develop both their teaching performance and a positive attitude toward teaching. The study also put forward a set of practical recommendations to improve Iraqi EFL student teacher education and training.

Section One: Introduction

The Problem and Its Significance

It is important for EFL student teachers to experience a high quality pre-service training in order to be successful in their professional future life. This is because teachers gain an important part of their teaching competencies during their undergraduate studies. During this period, pre-service teachers do not only gain the basic professional skills, but also develop certain attitudes pertaining to the profession. Therefore, the education given to pre-service teachers should allow them to develop positive attitudes towards teaching as well as improve themselves in their subject field (Tenjoh-Okwen, 2003:30).

Iraqi EFL college instructors, who supervise the teaching practice of EFL student teachers, among whom are the researchers, usually experience the inefficient teaching performance of prospective teachers due to their inability to make connections between the practical experience and the theoretical knowledge of TEFL. This may indicate that the college training programmers are not in step with the changing nature of EFL teaching nor they in tune with the changing nature of secondary school EFL curriculum. One reason behind the inability of training programs to produce well-prepared and well-qualified teachers may be the employment of traditional ways of training and instructing student teachers. In addition to that, Iraqi EFL student teachers are mostly noticed to reflect a negative attitude toward the teaching profession due to different reasons (Abbas, 2015:764). Since attitudes can be formed, changed, and modified by new experiences and knowledge of the attitude object (Mangal, 2008:335), the need, then, is for EFL teachers to be properly educated and trained for professional efficiency and inculcated with positive attitudes that enable them come out well equipped for the responsibility ahead.

Johnson and Johnson, (2002:36)
that cooperative learning is one of the innovative instructional strategies

through which teaching in general can be improved. It is, as stated by Cohen et al., (2004:4), a powerful approach to learning. And it is both an effective pedagogy and philosophical worldview. Moreover, Harmer (2007:107) emphasizes the re conceptualization of teaching with regard to cooperation. According to him, teaching is not only about the transmission of knowledge from teacher to students but it is about creating conditions in which, somehow, students learn for themselves.

In this study, cooperative learning, which is an educational approach seeks to structure classroom learning activities into academic and social learning experiences, is employed in training EFL student teachers as an alternative to the conventional ways of training. In this respect, cooperative learning in particular is suggested not only because there is a compelling research base in support of it, but also "it is fully compatible with the other currently prominent best practices such as differential instructions, hands on learning, and authentic assessment" (Cohen et al., 2004:4).

Aims

The present study aims at:

1. finding out the impact of cooperative training of EFL student teachers on their teaching performance.
2. finding out the impact of cooperative training of EFL student teachers on their attitude toward teaching.

Hypotheses

To achieve the study aims, the following hypotheses have been formulated:

1. There are no statistically significant differences between the experimental group students trained cooperatively and those of the control group trained conventionally in their teaching performance.
2. There are no statistically significant differences between the experimental group students and those of the control group in their attitude toward teaching.

Limits

This study is limited to:

1. the use of the cooperative learning strategy Consider-Pair-Share (CPS) in the training of EFL students teachers.
2. fourth year EFL students in the English departments / colleges of

education /University of Baghdad.

3. the academic year 2011-2012.

Value

This study can be beneficial to:

1. EFL college instructors in general and those responsible for the teaching practice courses in specific, as both are required to change their orientation from a view of teaching as static, with simple rules, to teaching as dynamic and ever changing. To do this, new practices and strategies which actually engage students in their learning are to be implemented to meet the challenging demands of teaching career. This study may also be beneficial in attracting EFL teacher trainers and educators' attention to the important idea that student teachers' instructional attitudes should never be underestimated. These attitudes are seen in the literature to play a crucial role in determining the implementation of instruction and its quality.
2. pre-service teachers and practicing teachers as they can develop their teaching performance through making use of the current study as a core text for skill-oriented course with practical skill focus. The skills dealt with in this study may be thought of as a minimum repertoire that all teachers should acquired.

Procedures

The main procedures followed in this study are:

1. selecting a representative sample to be divided into two groups: one as experimental and the other as control,
2. designing lesson plans to be followed for applying a cooperative learning strategy in EFL student teachers training.
3. constructing an observation checklist according to teaching performance standards,
4. constructing a questionnaire to investigate student-teachers' attitudes toward teaching,
5. applying the questionnaire to both groups,
6. using the cooperative strategy in training EFL student teachers in the experimental group, while the conventional way of training is to be used with students in the control group,

7. conducting recorded observation of the teaching performance of the two groups' subjects,
8. re-applying the questionnaire of attitude toward teaching to the two groups, and
9. manipulating the achieved data statistically.

Section Two: Theoretical Background

Cooperative Learning

Cooperative learning is an instructional approach that makes full use of cooperative activities which involve pairs and small groups of learners in the classroom. Such group learning activities are organized so that learning is dependent on the socially structured exchange of information between learners in groups and in which each learner is held accountable for his or her own learning and is motivated to increase the learning of others (Richards & Rodgers, 2001:192).

Cooperative learning can allow all learners to work together, each one experiencing the role of teacher and of learner, and each one modeling recognition of and respect for many different skills and learning styles. It encourages mutual respect and learning among students with varying talents and abilities (Marr, 1997:8). It is effective in reducing prejudice among students and in meeting the academic and the social needs of students at risk of educational failure. All students need to learn and work in environments where their individual strengths are recognized and individual needs are addressed (Cohen et al., 2004:3).

Cooperative approach to learning involves learner-centered characteristics. As students work together in pairs or groups, they share information and come to each others' aid. They are like a football team whose players must work together to score goals (Brown, 2001:47). Student-centered approaches to instruction provide a learning environment that invites students to actively participate in and help shape their own learning experiences (Moore, 2007:151).

Because learners work with each other cooperatively, a classroom atmosphere is created in which learners' stress is reduced and learners'

motivation is supported (Richards and Rodgers, 2001:193).

Theories Underlying Cooperative Learning

Cooperative group learning is one typical theme of constructivism which is hardly a new school of thought, yet it emerged as a prevailing paradigm only in the last part of the twentieth century. Other themes include: interactive discourse, sociocultural variables, interlanguage variability, and interactionist hypotheses (Brown, 2000:11-2).

Constructivism is a theory of learning which posits that students learn by actively constructing their own knowledge. Thus, knowledge is not seen as commodity to be transferred from expert to learners, but rather as a construct to be pieced together through an active process of involvement and interaction with the environment. Two main approaches under constructivism are cognitive and social. The former is associated with the work of Piaget and the latter with that of Vygotsky. The two approaches are not mutually exclusive, as underpinning both is the belief that students learn by constructing their own knowledge. However, the main emphasis in the two is different. Cognitive constructivists concentrate on the importance of the mind in learning, whereas social constructivists focus on the key role played by the environment and the interaction between learners (Schcolnik et al., 2006:13).

Vygotsky, while not underestimating the role of individual cognitive structures in learning, argues that the social interpersonal aspects of learning precede the individual intrapersonal aspects (Confrey, 1995: 190). He emphasizes the social origin of cognition and the effect of social interaction on learning (Duffy and Cunningham, 1996:187).

Vygotsky believes that the construction of knowledge, the gaining of skills, and the transformation of various points of view into personal thinking can result from cooperative efforts to learn understand and solve problems. Basically, the secret of effective learning lies in the nature of social interaction between two or more people with different levels of skill and knowledge. Each one, with his/her own knowledge and skills, tries to find a way to help the other to learn (Hill, 1997: 25)

Under constructivist theory, students need to reflect on what they are learning in order to integrate chunks of new knowledge into existing knowledge and thereby achieve synthesis. Such conceptual learning needs an

environment that encourages students' building skills and raises students' awareness not only of what they are learning, but also how they are learning (Von Glasersfled, 1995:177).

Constructivism cannot tell teachers new things to do, but it may suggest why certain attitudes and procedures are counter-productive, and it may point out opportunities for teachers to use their own spontaneous imagination. Teachers can affect learning in a range of ways that go far beyond the transmission of knowledge or skills. One of these ways would be likely to include organizing appropriate learning environment (William and Burden, 1997:51-65).

The main purpose of cooperative learning is to actively involve students in the learning process, a level of student empowerment which is not possible in a lecture format. The use of cooperative learning helps students clarify concepts and ideas through discussion and debate. Because the level of discussion within groups is significantly greater than in instructor- led discussion, students receive immediate feedback, and thus, advancing the level of discussion. It is through this process of interacting with students with differing viewpoints, cognitive growth is stimulated. Emphasis is placed on learning how to cooperate in order to find the best possible solutions to a problem. According to the constructivist approach, when students formulate their own solutions in this manner, they are truly thinking critically (Davis et.al, 1999:56).

Grouping

The success of cooperative learning may depend, at least in part, upon the attention given to arranging students into groups although, as Johnson & Johnson (1999:7) state "seating people together and calling them a cooperative group does not make them one".

When assigning students to cooperative groups or pairs controlled grouping is considered preferable to random grouping (Slavin, 1995: 32). Students clearly learn better overall in groups of different ability levels, and tolerance for others is learned when groups are diverse in terms of gender, ethnicity and academic success.

Katzenbach and Simth (1993: 59) describe the cooperative group as "a

small number of people with complementary skills who are committed to a common purpose, performance goals, and approach for which they hold themselves mutually accountable". The term "complementary skills" implies that mixed ability individuals are involved, each one complements the other as far as knowledge and skills are concerned. The size of the cooperative learning group varies, depending on the task to be accomplished. A learning group may be formed with two or more learners. However, the most common group size tends to be 4-6 students who are placed in task group composed of high, middle and low learners. The percentage of each level that is presented in the group generally approximates the percentage of that level in the whole class (Moore 2007:151-2).

Cooperative learning groups are best structured, assigned, guided, and managed through teacher-gathered data based on observations, conferencing with students, and other forms of student feedback. Good teaching involves careful notice of what is happening among students and thoughtful consideration about how and when to apply appropriate developmental or intervention strategies (Cohen et al.2004:38).

Teacher's Role in a Cooperative Class

A cooperative class usually demands the teacher to specify the objectives for the lesson and make a number of instructional decisions, e.g., group size, method of assigning students to groups, and explain the tasks and the positive interdependence. In addition, the classroom teacher is expected to perform such activities as monitoring students' learning, intervening within the groups to provide task assistance or to increase students' teamwork skills, evaluating students' learning, and helping students process how well their group or pair functioned. (Antil et al ,1998:421).

Student's Role in a Cooperative Class

The roles of students in cooperative language classes are significantly different from their roles in the traditional teacher – centered classroom. The students are no longer trying to impress their teacher but are busy learning actively. The primary role of the learner is to contribute to the completion of the group tasks while collaboratively working with the members of the group.

Because they are taught how to organize their study to keep their group working and to monitor and assess their learning process, they become the directors of their own learning (Richards & Rodgers 2001:199).

Consider-Pair-Share Strategy

Consider-Pair-Share, henceforth CPS, or sometimes Think-Pair-Share (TPS) is a cooperative learning strategy developed by Frank Lyman and his colleagues in Maryland University 1981. It gets its name from the three stages of student action, with emphasis on what students are to be doing at each of those stages. It enables students to formulate individual ideas and share these ideas with another student. It encourages student class participation and structures discussion. In CPS, the teacher assigns students to pairs, choosing two students of different academic abilities to form a pair. Such assignment may sometimes be done according to students' selection of a partner, yet the teacher has the final decision to agree or disagree. Pairs should contain one low ability student and the other is average/high ability student. (Olsen and Kagan, 1992).

Steps of Implementing CPS Strategy

The teacher presents a new item, question, or task and allows students to take their notes. Then, the teacher provokes students' reflection with clues and/or prompts. The teacher should give sufficient time, depending on the complexity or the difficulty of the question. Providing time for students to consider and think of question would increase the quality of the response. Meanwhile, the students, in pairs, discuss and change ideas concerning the teacher's question to come up with a response. They compare their mental or written notes and identify the response they think best or most convincing. The time pause provides a chance for students to stop, reflect on the tasks, concepts and ideas that have just been introduced, make connections to prior knowledge or experience, and seek clarification. The students are allowed to share their responses with the whole class. Thus, in CPS, students follow a prescribed process that limits off-task thinking and off-task behavior, and accountability is built because each student must report to a partner, and then partners must report to the class. The strategy is likely to help students

develop conceptual understanding of topics, develop the ability to filter information and draw conclusions, and develop the ability to consider the other's point of view (Kagan, 1994:66).

Attitude Theory

The concept of attitude is essential in almost every behavioral science. It is inferred from behavior and cannot be directly observed. (Dawes 1972:16).

According to Triandis (1971:2), attitude is learned and that most of the attitudes that an individual develops are obtained from communicating with family and friends. He explained further that people also acquire attitudes from direct experience with the attitude object.

Attitudes could be altered in a number of ways. The cognitive component can be changed by the acquisition of new information, the affective can be altered by pleasant/unpleasant experiences involving the attitude object. While the behavioral component can be changed by changes in norms or laws that force a behavioral change (Schafer & Tait, 1986:6)

Attitude together with other factors can predict behavior with great accuracy. Behaviors can be predicated based on four components: attitude, norms, habits, and expectations. When the four components are consistent, there is a strong connection between attitude and behavior. However, when the four factors are inconsistent, the relationship is weak (Rokeach 1986:109).

Measuring attitudes has a great value on modifying attitudes or perhaps changing them towards a certain subject. In other words, attitudes have the power to be changed in spite of their relative stability (Zahran, 1977:167).

The Relation Between Teaching and Attitudes

Teachers' educational attitudes, although in many cases unconsciously held, have an effect on their classroom behaviors, influence what students actually learn, and are potent determinants of teachers' teaching styles (Karavas, 1996:191).

Because one cannot act contrary to his/her attitude, teachers' attitudes towards teaching have an effect on their classroom performance. Smith (1993:30) schematized this cause and effect relationship as follows:

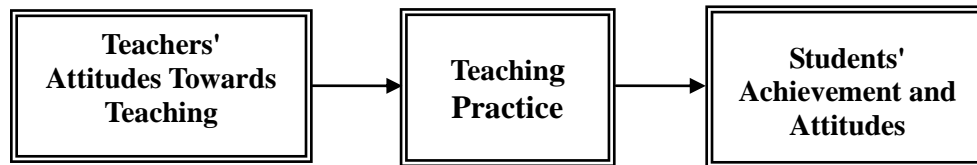


Figure 1
The Relationship between Attitudes and Teaching Practices

Richards and Lockhart maintain that "what teachers do is a reflection of what they know and believe" and that the teacher's attitudes and thinking is likely to form the underlying framework which guides the teacher's classroom practices (1994:29).

Teachers' attitudes are extremely important because of the relationship between attitude and action. Teacher attitudes are often translated into specific classroom and instructional practices which in turn affect student behavioural and learning outcomes (Wood, 2000:572).

Attitudes can be formed or modified by experience. For example, effective language teaching strategies can encourage students to be more positive towards the language they are learning (Eliss, 1994: 57). Then, it can be said that through interesting and effective teaching and training strategies, student teachers may be assisted to form positive attitudes toward different educational concepts and factors. Through such strategies, student teachers may also change their already formed attitudes into more positive ones.

Section Three: *Methodology*

Experimental Design

The nature and the aims of this study demand the use of one of quasi-experimental designs, namely the Non Randomized Control Group Pretest-Posttest Design. The experimental design of the study is illustrated in Table (1).

Table 1
The Experimental Design of the Study

Group	Pretest	Independent variable	Dependent variables	Post test
Experimental	Attitude Questionnaire	Cooperative Training	Teaching Performance + Attitude toward Teaching	Observation of Teaching Performance + Attitudes Scale
Control	Attitude Questionnaire	X		

According to this design, two groups have been randomly assigned, one as experimental group and the other as the control one. CPS strategy is applied to the experimental group. And the conventional way of training is applied to the control group. Teaching performance and attitude toward teaching represent the two dependent variables under study.

Population and Sample

The population of the study consists of fourth year students at the Departments of English, Colleges of Education, University of Baghdad. These colleges are College of Education for Human Sciences/ Ibn-Rushd and College of Education for Women. The total number of the population is 271 (Table 2).

Table 2
The Population of the Study

Colleges	No. of 4th year students
College of Education, for Human Sciences/IbnRushd	167
College of Education for Women	104
Total	271

College of Education for Human Sciences/Ibn-Rushd is deliberately chosen from which the sample of the study is selected because the researchers are faculty members at this college. In this college, the fourth stage at the Department of English includes four sections. Section C (with 41 students) has

been chosen randomly to be the experimental group and section B (42 students) is the control one. After excluding students who have previous experience in EFL teaching, whether students who are originally primary school teachers or those who are repeaters at the fourth stage, the sample includes (36) participants in the experimental group and (33) in the control one. (Table 3).

Table 3
The Sample of the Study

Group	No. of Participants
Experimental	36
Control	33
Total	69

Group Equalization

Establishing equivalent groups by balancing individual differences of group subjects is of great importance in experimental studies. Without such equivalence, some variables may affect the study results. The Equalization of the two study groups involved in this study is checked before the experiment begins. This checking is done according to three influential variables; they are the multiple intelligence level, the final scores in methods of teaching course (of the third year), and the scores in the pre-administration of attitudes towards teaching questionnaire. Computed t-test values of the three checked variables are found to be (1.56), (1.80), and (1.77) respectively at (0.05) level of significance and under (67) degree of freedom. All these values are lower than the critical t-test value (2.0). Accordingly, there are no statistically significant differences between the two groups and they are equivalent in terms of these three variables.

The Study Instruments

To achieve the aims of the study, two instruments are constructed and applied. The first one is an observation checklist used to measure student

teachers' teaching performance; while the other is a questionnaire used to measure their attitude toward teaching.

The Teaching Performance Checklist (TPC)

One procedure for conducting this study is to observe student teachers while practising teaching during the practicum period. To record the observation data, an observation checklist is constructed by the researchers. It is constructed relying on a classification of basic standards of teaching suggested by the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching, 2011. These standards fall into four main domains. The first is devoted to instruction, the second is about designing and planning instruction, the third is concerned with the learning environment, while the fourth sums up the teachers responsibilities (Appendix I).

These standards are adopted because of their comprehensiveness and clarity. The checklist reflects the domains of standards adopted. The first domain contains 20 items, the second has 5 items, and the third includes 7 items. The last domain is excluded as discussed later. The total number of checklist items is 32. The rating scale is a four point scale with the attributes: poor, fair, good, very good and the corresponding values; 1, 2, 3, and 4 respectively. (Appendix II)

The Attitudes toward Teaching Questionnaire (ATTQ)

ATTQ is constructed depending on the related previous studies concerned with attitudes.

The total number of items in the final version of the questionnaire is 28. These items are assessed on a scale of five points, namely; strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, and strongly disagree. The corresponding values of the scale point are 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively. (Appendix III).

Validity of the Two Instruments

The TPC

The initial form of the TPC includes 38 items. The checklist, along with the adopted standards, are exposed to a jury of (15) TEFL experts to decide whether or not the standards and the checklist items are suitable for

measuring Iraqi student teachers' teaching performance, to modify the suggested rating scale if needed, and to decide face validity. The majority of the experts (80%) recommend the exclusion of the fourth domain; namely 'Professionalism' because, as they see, it reflects tasks and responsibilities of in-service teachers rather than student teachers. The experts also recommend excluding the item of 'Thinking' in the first domain. Most of them (86.6%) believe that 'Thinking' is difficult to be observed and measured through classroom observation. According to these recommendations, 6 items are deleted from the initial form of the TPC. All experts (100%) have shown their approval to the suggested rating scale.

The ATTQ

The initial form of the ATTQ which includes 30 items is exposed to a jury of (12) experts in the field of psychology to check its face validity by deciding whether or not its items reflect the domain of interest, i.e. attitude toward teaching. The majority of the experts (91%) show their agreement to the ATTQ except for two items because, as they see, they are irrelevant to the domain of this study. These two items are excluded in the final version of the ATTQ.

Constructive validity is based on the extent to which the items in a test reflect the essential aspects of the theory on which the test is based i.e., the construct (Richards and Schmidt, 2010:142). One approach to determining the construct validity of a measure relies on other kinds of validity such as discriminative validity. Discriminative validity is shown by the fact that the test correlates little or not at all with measures of other traits, whether by the same method or by other methods (Riazi, 1999:76). As for the ATTQ, item analysis and item discrimination have been obtained.

The Pilot Administration

The TPC

To fully develop the observation checklist of teaching performance, a pilot administration is conducted to check the clarity of the items, to estimate the time needed for the observation, and to compute the checklist reliability.

The pilot sample is 32 student teachers who are students of section A at the

Department of English, College of Education for Human Sciences/Ibn-Rushd.
They are not part of the study sample.

The ATTQ

To develop the questionnaire items, a pilot administration has been conducted to check the clarity of the items, to estimate the time needed for student teachers to respond to the questionnaire, and to compute the questionnaire reliability.

A sample of 102 student teachers from College of Education for Human sciences /Ibn Rushd (section D) and College of Education for Women has been selected for statistical purposes.

Item Analysis of the ATTQ

Discrimination Power

After scoring the sample students responses to the items of the questionnaire, their total scores have been divided into upper group's scores and lower group's ones on the whole questionnaire. The reason behind such division is to obtain the discrimination power of each item. This is done by applying t-test for two independent samples to test the significant differences between the mean scores of the upper and the lower group for each item of the questionnaire. t-computed value of the questionnaire items are found to be ranging between 2.116- 9.331. This means that the t-computed value for each item is higher than the critical one which is 2.0 at 0.05 level of significance and 100 degree of freedom. This indicates that all t-values of items are statistically significant and applicable to the participants in this study.

Item-total Correlation

In item analysis, the item-total correlation between the answers to an individual item and the scores on the whole test is often used as an estimate of discrimination (Richards and Schmidt, 2010:303). To identify the correlation of an individual item and the scores of the whole measure, Parson correlation coefficient is employed for the ATTQ. It shows that items correlation coefficient is ranging between 0.231-0.336. When compared with the critical t-value which is 0.196, all the correlation coefficients are statistically significant at 100 degree of freedom and at 0.05 level of significance.

Reliability

To calculate the reliability of the two instruments, Cronbach's Alpha which is a measure of internal consistency is used. It calculates an equivalent to the average of all possible split-half correlations based on information about (a) the number of items on the instrument, (b) the variance of the scores of each item, and (c) the variance of the total scores (Richards and Schmidt, 2010:147). However, a reliability equivalent of 0.70 or higher is sufficient (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994:256).

Employing Cronbach's Alpha yields the equivalent averages 0.780 and 0.955 for the TPC and ATTQ respectively. Since both averages are higher than 0.70, the instruments, then, can be judged to be reliable.

The Experiment

The experiment started on the 20th of October 2011 and ended on the 24th of February 2012. It lasted for three months and a half after excluding the midyear holiday.

CPS is applied to students in three successive lessons per week. The teacher (one of the researchers) has assigned students to pairs according to their academic ability and attitude toward teaching (each pair includes two students with different academic ability and different attitude toward teaching). The assignment is guided by the teacher's observation which is in turn a kind of evaluation.

The teacher, for example, introduces the procedures of teaching vocabulary items. The teacher may support her explanation with illustrative video(s) of vocabulary teaching. The teacher directs students to take notes on the presented teaching procedures. Then she selects a vocabulary (Key Words) task from the textbook 'Iraq Opportunities' for 1st or 2nd intermediate class. This task represents an activity which the students are going to microteach. The teacher provides students with sufficient time to work on the task in pairs. She guides students to cooperate and share ideas to decide on how to present the selected material first in pairs and then with the whole class. Then, one (or each) of the students in a pair is asked to microteach the material. After the microteaching session, the pair of students reflect on their teaching performance and discuss it with the teacher and class. They are finally required to write a report about the weaknesses and strengths in their

teaching performance. A sample of a lesson plan of the experimental group is illustrated in Appendix IV.

With respect to the control group, the same instructional materials and aids are used except for the training procedures. The conventional way of instruction is used in which student teachers work individually to achieve the course objectives.

Final Administration of Instruments

Administering the observation of teaching performance on the participants in the two groups takes three weeks starting on 4th of March 2012. As for the questionnaire of attitudes toward teaching, it is administered on the 20th of Feb 2012 to the participants in both groups.

Section Four : Results and Conclusions

Results Related to the Teaching Performance

The statistical treatment for the scores of the two groups of this study with respect to the teaching performance shows that the mean of the experimental group is 79.83 and it is 67.39 for the control group. The standard deviations are 16.17 and 17.69, respectively. The computed t-value is found to be 3.28 which is higher than the critical t- value 2.0 at 0.05 level of significance and under 67 degree of freedom (Table 4).

Table 4
T-test value for students' scores in TPC

Group	No.	Mean	SD	t-value		d.f	L of S
				Computed	Critical		
Experimental	36	79.83	16.17	3.28	2.00	67	0.05
Control	33	67.39	17.69				

This indicates that there are statistically significant differences between the experimental group students and those in the control group in their teaching performance. These differences are in favor of the experimental group as it has the higher mean. Accordingly, the first null hypothesis is rejected.

Results Related to the Attitudes towards Teaching

The statistical treatment for the scores of the two groups pertaining to the attitude toward teaching shows that the mean of the experimental group is 83.44, and of the control group is 69.06. The standard deviations are 30.34 for the experimental group, and 29.34 for the control one. The computed t-value is found to be 2.15 which is higher than the critical t- value 2.0 at 0.05 level of significance and under 67 degree of freedom (Table 5).

Table 5
T-test value for students' scores in ATTQ

Group	No.	Mean	SD	t-value		d.f	L of S
				Computed	Critical		
Experimental	36	83.44	30.34	2.15	2.00	67	0.05
Control	33	69.06	29.34				

This indicates that there are statistically significant differences between the experimental group students and those in the control group in their attitude toward teaching. Again, the differences are in favor of the experimental group. Accordingly, the second null hypothesis is also rejected.

Interpretation of Results

1. Employing a cooperative strategy in training Iraqi EFL student teachers is effective in enabling them to develop their teaching performance.
2. Employing a cooperative strategy in training Iraqi EFL student teachers is effective in enabling them to develop a positive attitude toward teaching.

The reasons behind these results can be summarized as follows:

1. The subjects of the experimental group have been taught by CPS strategy which is a cooperative learning strategy based on exchanging and sharing ideas to reach the most accepted response(s). The teacher assigns high ability students with average or low ability ones and students with more positive attitude toward teaching with those having

negative or less positive attitude, to form pairs. Students of high ability and positive attitude assist those who are of average or low ability and less positive attitude in order to fulfill a task or provide a satisfactory response. This is the basic principle of cooperative learning. While subjects of the control group have been left to their own ways of learning, without the teacher's intervention.

2. Cooperative learning develops students' positive attitudes pertaining to the subject. In this study, students who are trained according to CPS strategy develop more positive attitudes towards EL teaching. However, such development, in turn, is reflected in their teaching performance. While students of the control group learn and practice teaching according to their own ways, i.e. competitively or individually which do not develop their attitude as cooperative learning does.
3. Attitudes can be developed and modified by experience. Experience here implies the opportunity to work cooperatively with the peer. Such peer influence lead to the modification and development of attitudes.

Conclusions

1. Implementing new and modern strategies in teaching and training may contribute to the development of students' skills, attitudes, and achievement. Cooperative learning is one of the innovative pedagogies that is found to be positively effective in improving EFL student teachers' teaching performance.
2. This new experience of cooperation among students required by cooperative learning modifies EFL student teachers' attitudes pertaining to teaching.
3. Engaging students in cooperative interaction in the class allows them to reach their fullest potential in all aspects of the basic teaching practices.
4. Classroom based pedagogies of engagement, one of which is cooperative learning, can help break the traditional lecture-dominant pattern.
5. A developmental approach to practicum is preferred where student teachers begin frequent classroom observation, then half-days of working with individuals, then small groups of students before progressing to teach

an entire class. Such a program would allow student teachers to become familiar with the cultural and linguistic settings of the classroom and would allow them to gain a better understanding of their roles as teachers.

Recommendations

1. Student teachers training affects their future classroom actions and knowledge, therefore, it should be given more attention by decision makers.
2. Due to its importance in the colleges of education programs, practical training of student teachers should be done through the use of different interesting, up to date strategies one of which is the cooperative strategy.
3. Practicum offers student teachers' the actual implementation of what they have been taught in both Methods of Teaching (in their third year) and Teaching practice in their first semester of the fourth year. Thus, it should be longer than 6 weeks.
4. Teacher trainers and educators should encourage and help student teachers develop desirable professional attitudes related to teaching.
5. To maximize students' learning, instructors should not allow them to remain passive while they are learning. One way to get students more actively involved is to structure cooperative interaction into classes, getting them to teach course material to one another and to dig below superficial levels of understanding.
6. It is vital for students to have peer support not only to learn the material at a deeper level, but also to know their classmates and to build a sense of community with them.
7. The third year Course of Methods of Teaching should cover the most up-to-date strategies and techniques of teaching and learning.
8. The third-year Course of Methods of Teaching should include a practical use of the teaching methods. The practical use may include both microteaching lessons presented by students and visiting schools to observe in-service teachers. Such visits can also offer student teachers' opportunities to micro teach in front of real school students.
9. Colleges of education should include at least one laboratory of language teaching training, equipped with teaching technologies.

10.Cooperation between Ministry of Education and Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research should be enhanced to reduce the problems faced by student teachers during practicum.

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Appendix I The Adapted Standards

INSTRUCTION	ENVIRONMENT
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Standards and Objectives 2. Motivating Students 3. Presenting Instructional Content 4. Lesson Structure and Pacing 5. Activities and Materials 6. Questioning 7. Academic Feedback 8. Grouping Students 9. Teacher Content Knowledge 10. Teacher Knowledge of Students 11. Thinking 12. Problem Solving 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Expectations 2. Managing Student Behavior 3. Environment 4. Respectful Culture
PLANNING	PROFESSIONALISM
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Instructional Plans 2. Student Work 3. Assessment 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Community Involvement 2. School Responsibilities 3. Growing and Developing Professionally 4. Reflecting on Teaching

The National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (2011)

Appendix II
The Teaching Performance Checklist

Domain	Standards	No	Items	Poor	Fair	Good	V.Good
Domain 1 : Instruction	1.Standards & Objectives	1	The teacher develops objectives that can be reached, measured, and observed.				
		2	The teacher implements lesson plan's objectives.				
	2.Motivating Students	3	The teacher motivates and assists students when engaging in learning and interaction.				
		4	The teacher uses different kinds of motivating procedures.				
	3.Presenting Instructional Content	5	The teacher establishes appropriate cognitive sets (Cognitive sets are the teacher actions and statements at the outside of a lesson to get students attention, to trigger interest, and to establish a conceptual framework).				
		6	Using a variety of interesting teaching procedures to present the new content.				
		7	The teacher utilizes students' previous knowledge in presenting the new content.				
	4.Lesson Structure & Pacing	8	The teacher leads a lesson that has a recognizable purpose, organization, and development, Common lesson structure: Warm up, Opening Activities, Closing.				
		9	The teacher makes full use of class time in covering lesson material.				
	5.Activities and Materials	10	The teacher uses any classroom procedure that requires students to use and practice their available language resources.				
		11	The teacher uses anything to facilitate the learning of language, i.e. Linguistic, visual, auditory, or kinesthetic materials.				
	6.Questionin	12	The teacher uses different procedures in				

	g		asking questions.				
		13	The teacher uses different kinds of questions demanding different levels of thinking on the part of students.				
	7.Academic Feedback	14	The teacher provides different types of feedback.				
	8.Grouping Students	15	The teacher places students either in pairs or in small groups composed of high, middle, and low learners.				
	9.Teacher Content Knowledge	16	The teacher presents cognitively demanding subject matter in a manner that is comprehensible to students using accurate English.				
		17	Using fluent English.				
	10.Teacher Knowledge of Students	18	The teacher exhibits sensitivity and understanding of individual differences among students.				
		19	Showing signs of individualized instruction.				
	12.Problem Solving	20	Using different problem solving tasks and assignments.				
	Domain 2 : Planning	1.Instructional Plans	21	The teacher uses an overall conceptual plan and organization to design a lesson or a unit of instructional materials.			
22			The teacher plans reflect the criteria and conditions under which the students will carry out the tasks.				
2.Student Work		23	The teacher assigns different types of work to students.				
3.Assessment		24	The teacher assesses students by collecting information and making inferences about the ability of each student.				
		25	The teacher uses different evaluative procedures.				
Domain 1	1.Expectations	26	Creating comfortable environment for students learning as teacher's expectations are not higher than				

		students' cognitive and linguistic levels.				
	27	The teacher models positive attitudes towards the curriculum, school, and learning in general.				
2.Managing Student Behavior	28	The teacher maintains order in the class.				
	29	The teacher implements positive behavior supports.				
	30	Being decisive in dealing with disruptive behavior.				
3.Environment	31	The teacher participates in sustaining an appropriate physical learning environment.				
4.Respectful Culture	32	The teacher demonstrates an understanding of and respect for cultural diversity.				

Appendix III

The Attitudes toward Teaching Questionnaire

No.	Items	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	I think teaching is a humanistic profession.					
2	I feel very happy when practicing teaching.					
3	I think I will not continue on teaching.					
4	The idea of being a teacher interests me.					
5	Teaching is a boring profession.					
6	I like teaching and everything related to it.					
7	I think I can overcome all teaching challenges.					
8	I like teaching because teachers are well-paid.					
9	I am completely confident that I am a good teacher.					

No.	Items	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
10	I hate the personality of a teacher.					
11	Whatever teaching is a challenging profession, I will be a teacher.					
12	Being a teacher will make me highly respected and appreciated in the community.					
13	Teaching is an attractive profession.					
14	I possess a teacher's personality.					
15	I do not advise anyone to be a teacher.					
16	As a teacher, I can do a lot to such a profession.					
17	I think that teaching demands certain qualifications not available for all people.					
18	I think I will be a distinguished teacher.					
19	I disagree with the idea that teaching is a boring profession.					
20	I regret choosing teaching as a profession.					
21	I were to choose other profession, I would also choose teaching.					
22	I hate discussing things concerning teaching.					
23	I think the courses of teaching methods are not important.					
24	I like to discuss teaching issues with professional teachers.					
25	I will continue loving teaching.					
26	I have chosen teaching profession by chance only.					

No.	Items	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
27	I will pursue higher studies so as not to be a school teacher.					
28	Teaching profession offers economic security.					

Appendix IV

The Lesson Plan of the Experimental Group

Each practicum class is just under two hours in length and occurs once a week over the Teaching Practice course.

Subject: Teaching Vocabulary

Goal : The student teachers will acquire and develop basic practical skills of Teaching English as a foreign language.

Objectives:

The student teachers will be able to:

explain the importance of teaching the meaning of new vocabulary as well as the form, and showing how words are used in context.

apply techniques for showing the meaning of new words.

implement how to reinforce new vocabulary by asking questions using the new words.

(5 minutes)

Warm up:

The teacher refers student teachers that there are many techniques for presenting new words, the choice of which depends on the distinction between abstract/concrete words, and the learning situation itself.

(5 minutes)

Procedures:

1. The student teachers have already been assigned to pairs. The teacher allows student teachers to take notes on their worksheets.
2. The teacher refers student teachers to how to teach key words (active vocabulary). She explain some techniques for teaching new words, such

as:

- Say the word clearly and write it on the board.
 - Get the class to repeat the word in chorus.
 - Translate the word into Arabic.
 - Ask students to translate the word which means showing meaning visually.
 - Give an English example to show how the word is used.
 - Ask questions using the new words.
3. The teacher then asks the student teachers to think of any other techniques they could use. She starts discussing with them what answers they give but without going into detail about any technique at this point. The purpose of this question is simply to encourage student teachers to start thinking about their own way of teaching and about possible techniques for presenting vocabulary.
 4. The teacher points out that often a combination of these techniques can be used to show the meaning of a word. She presents the word "smile" as an example. She draws a picture of a smiling face on the board. And then she comments: "we smile when we are happy". She shows this by facial expression. Then she asks a student to give her the translation of this word.
 5. The final activity is lesson preparation in which student teacher plan part of a lesson incorporating ideas and techniques that have been introduced in the training session. This is intended to act as a link between the training session and classroom teaching, and to encourage student teachers to try out new techniques in their own classes.
(30 minutes)

Evaluation:

The teacher gives each group a task from Iraq opportunities for 1st or 2nd intermediate English textbook. The teacher asks student teachers to write down the techniques of teaching vocabulary of that task in a form of a lesson plan. After 5 of exchanging ideas, the teacher calls for some students from different pairs to read their plans. If needed, the teacher also provides student teachers with sufficient time to rework on the task. She guides them to cooperate and share ideas first in pairs and then to the whole class. The

teacher allows pairs to exchange their written responses before presenting them. (15 minutes)

The Practical Part:

Microteaching begins. 4-5 student teachers have already volunteered from the previous lecture to micro teach. Each presenter micro teaches for a ten –minute lesson. After each presentation, the student teacher receives feedback from students and the teacher. When student teacher presents a micro lesson, his/her group members write a brief step-by-step description of the teaching technique presented. Pairs have already helped each other to prepare the presentation. (65 minutes)

أثر التدريب التعاوني لطلبة اللغة الانكليزية
المدرسين في أدائهم التدريسي واتجاهاتهم نحو مهنة
التدريس

الأستاذ المساعد الدكتور سلام حامد عباس
المدرس الدكتور أنوار عدنان جواد

المستخلص

استهدفت الدراسة الحالية توظيف استراتيجية التعلم التعاوني (فكر - زوج - شارك) في تدريب الطلبة/المدرسين في أقسام اللغة الانكليزية في كليات التربية ، وقياس اثرها في تطوير ادائهم التدريسي، واتجاهاتهم نحو مهنة التدريس . ولتحقيق أهداف الدراسة اختار الباحث عينة تتكون من طلبة المرحلة الرابعة في قسم اللغة الانكليزية في كلية التربية/ابن رشد للعلوم الإنسانية ، وتوزيعها عشوائيا بين مجموعتين تجريبية وضابطة. وتم بناء استمارة ملاحظة صفية واستبانة لتقويم الاداء التدريسي والاتجاه نحو مهنة التدريس لافراد العينة . فضلا عن تصميم عدد من الخطط التدريسية الخاصة بتوظيف استراتيجية التعلم التعاوني في تدريب الطلبة/ المدرسين لاستعمالها مع المجموعة التجريبية . واستمرت التجربة التي تم فيها تدريب افراد المجموعة التجريبية وفقا للخطة المصممة مسبقا اربعة عشر اسبوعا , في حين تم تدريب افراد المجموعة الضابطة بالطريقة التقليدية. وبعد انتهاء التجربة تم تطبيق اداتي الدراسة على افراد المجموعتين، وظهرت النتائج بان توظيف استراتيجية التعلم التعاوني في تدريب طلبة اللغة الانكليزية / المدرسين له اثر واضح في تطوير ادائهم في تدريس اللغة الانكليزية ، فضلا عن بناء و تعزيز اتجاه ايجابي نحو مهنة التدريس . وفي ضوء النتائج قدم الباحث مجموعة من التوصيات قد تسهم في تطوير تعليم وتدريب الطلبة / المدرسين في اقسام اللغة الانكليزية في الجامعات العراقية .