



*Listening Performance of Iraqi Intermediate EFL Learners in
Collaborative Learning and their Attitudes Towards it*

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اداء الاستماع لدى المتعلمين العراقيين للغة الانكليزية كلغة اجنبية في المستوى
المتوسط بطريقة التعلم التعاوني ومواقفهم تجاهه

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Abstract

This pre-experimental study was conducted among Iraqi intermediate EFL students at BA level. It was an attempt to consider Iraqi intermediate EFL learners' listening performance in CL, focusing on their attitudes toward contribution to the classroom. To achieve the study's goals regarding views on collaborative learning, 60 Iraqi male and female students, aged between 20-25, were invited to participate in the study. The study was conducted at University of Kufa, college of education, in Najaf, Iraq. The study's conclusions demonstrated that most participants thought collaborative learning was helpful for their learning. Furthermore, this study showed that collaborative learning strategies significantly impact the listening comprehension of Iraqi intermediate EFL learners.

Keywords: attitudes, collaborative learning, EFL learners, listening performance

المستخلص

تم إجراء هذا الدراسة الشبه تجريبية على الطلبة العراقيين المتعلمين للغة الإنكليزية كلغة اجنبية في المستوى المتوسط في مرحلة البكالوريوس. لقد كانت هذه الدراسة محاولة للنظر في آداء الاستماع للمتعلمين العراقيين للغة الإنكليزية كلغة اجنبية في المستوى المتوسط في العراق مع التركيز على مواقفهم تجاه المساهمة في الفصل الدراسي. ولتحقيق أهداف الدراسة فيما يتعلق بالأراء حول التعلم التعاوني، تمت دعوة ٦٠ طالب وطالبة عراقيين تتراوح اعمارهم بين ٢٠-٢٥ عاما للمشاركة في الدراسة. أجريت الدراسة في جامعة الكوفة في النجف، العراق. أظهرت نتائج الدراسة أن معظم المشاركين يعتقدون أن التعليم التعاوني كان مفيداً لتعلمهم. علاوة على ذلك، أظهرت هذه الدراسة أن استراتيجيات التعلم التعاوني تؤثر بشكل كبير على فهم الاستماع لدى متعلمي اللغة الإنكليزية كلغة أجنبية في المستوى المتوسط.

الكلمات المفتاحية: المواقف، التعلم التعاوني، متعلمي اللغة الإنكليزية كلغة أجنبية، أداء الاستماع

1. Introduction

Students who participate in collaborative learning (CL) work in groups inside and outside the classroom. The amount of time spent on group work can vary. Joint activities can be different types of work that students do together. It can be talking in class, listening to the teacher, and then talking again. It can also be working in a group for a whole class period. Or it can be doing research with a team for a long time, like an entire term or year. The objectives and ways in which people work together can be very different. In some CL contexts, students are asked to make something specific, while in other settings, they are asked to take an active role in a process where they give feedback on each other's work or discuss and make meaning out of it.

In CL, gaining interpersonal skills is just as vital as learning new things. The foundation of excellent group work is the development of social skills and the ability to collaborate. In CL contexts, students must manage their learning, work with others, and share what they have learned. However, not all students know how to do this. Therefore, students in groups work together to manage their and others' knowledge.

Additionally, within these groups, how confident individuals feel about their abilities can significantly affect how they perceive their overall effectiveness, affecting how well the group performs and accomplishes its goals. EFL teachers must understand the problems that EFL students face when learning a new language. This way, they can find solutions to help students overcome these problems and improve their learning. Fadaeian and Aliakbari (2020) say that EFL teachers should look at what impacts collaborative learning (CL) to make their teaching as effective as possible. Because not many EFL settings use CL programs, studying how beneficial this method is is essential.

Furthermore, there is another idea connected to CL called efficacy beliefs. Donohoo (2017) emphasizes the significance of efficacy beliefs because they strongly influence how well students perform. It is crucial not to underestimate or ignore their impact on student achievement.

Moreover, language teachers and teachers have been greatly concerned about listening well. Listening is essential for people who think learning a second language is similar to learning their first language. Listening is the primary way learners understand and learn a new language (Caspersz & Stasinska, 2015). In simple terms, learning a language involves taking in information and using it to communicate. According to this idea, Rezaee et al. (2020), listening skills are a big part of what we learn and are an essential way to gain information. Because what you put in dramatically affects what you get out, it is necessary to be good at listening while producing something. Considering this idea, listening is essential for speaking because it helps create a foundation for conversation.

The progress of Iraqi EFL students' receptive language skills has become the primary concern of academics in the last couple of years (Mohammed, 2014; Rezaee et al., 2019). However, the role of CL techniques in increasing the opportunity to expand listening skills has remained unquestioned by scholars since It is usual for EFL teachers to encourage working together in L2 lessons in today's EFL classrooms. This idea is based on the belief that when EFL learners work together on tasks and practice using the L2, they can achieve common goals and improve their social interaction skills.

2. Literature Review

CL is a method of instruction in which students collaborate in groups to find solutions to issues, finish tasks, or make something. In the CL environment, learners face social and emotional challenges as they listen to different viewpoints and have to express and support their thoughts. When learners do this, they start developing their own special ways of thinking about things, not only depending on what experts or books say. In a CL setting, learners can talk with classmates, share ideas, debate, learn from different perspectives, challenge different ways of thinking, and participate actively. CL represents a significant change from the usual way of teaching in college classrooms, where the teacher is in control and gives lectures. In classrooms where students work together, the traditional way of lecturing, listening and taking notes may still happen. Still, it occurs at the same time as other activities where students talk and actively engage with the details of the course. Educators who employ CL techniques perceive themselves less as experts imparting knowledge to students and more as experts creating thought experiences for them, akin to coaches or assistants in a lifelong learning process (Christian-Brandt et al., 2020).

Moreover, listening skills are critical in learning a new language as they are crucial for understanding and absorbing it (Mulyadi et al., 2022). When we understand and make sense of what we hear, it requires knowing how we perceive things. But, changing information into a different form and creating spoken words requires accessing knowledge. Understanding what we hear is essential when learning a language. It helps us learn other skills in the language, too. Therefore, being aware and using effective listening strategies can help learners understand and learn from what they hear in a language. Listening is essential when learning

a language because it provides the learners with the necessary information. Without understanding what is being said, learners can't remember anything.

Listening is a difficult concept to understand and analyze. This means that it is hard to give a simple and fast explanation of what listening is. It can also be called one of the four essential abilities used in teaching a language and one of the two abilities used when talking to others. The ability to listen is the weakest skill for EFL students. They struggle with various listening problems. It is a skill that, in the EFL context, is usually ignored by most stakeholders (Alvarenga et al., 2020).

In a study, Kluger and Itzchakov (2022) examined the concept of listening, its experimental manipulations and measurement, and the results, causes, and moderators of listening in CL. They proposed that applying CL approaches improved listening, a dyadic phenomenon that benefits both the speaker and the listener. Salih and Abdelameer (2022) emphasized the value of CL as a teaching strategy for EFL students in the interim. Their study, which included quantitative and qualitative methods, concentrated on a few of Barros's ideas on CL as teamwork and some of the participants' positive outcomes that fell into four categories: negative aspects, academic outcomes, social outcomes, and generic talents. In their experimental investigation, 100 undergraduate students from the University of Baghdad, Iraq's College of Veterinary Medicine, who were enrolled in their first academic year participated. They concluded that there was a statistically significant treatment impact between CL and the skill development of Iraqi EFL learners.

Jalilifar (2010) compared the reading comprehension gaps between student teams and English language learners receiving traditional classroom instruction in a CL setting. The results

showed that student teams significantly improved their performance on a standardized English language proficiency test. Chen (2005) looked at the impact of a collaborative education model on the reading comprehension of 89 secondary school students in Taiwan in a different study. The study concluded that teaching subjects comprehension strategies improved their capacity to comprehend critical concepts, draw conclusions, and locate solutions to in-depth queries.

Ismail and Abdul Aziz (2020) systematically analyzed relevant evaluations of various teaching and learning tactics employed in ESL classrooms. They tried to learn more about the multiple approaches to teaching listening skills. The findings showed that three listening techniques—bottom-up, top-down, and interactive processing—are often used. Their study's conclusions demonstrated that interactive processing is more effective at enhancing listening comprehension abilities overall.

Additionally, Caspersz and Stasinska (2015) investigated students' perceptions of how open space technology (OST), a unique method of listening, improved their comprehension of a subject. They also wanted to clarify how cooperation and an intervention might help pupils learn to listen well. Their findings revealed that in the group in which CL strategies were used, they performed better in listening skills. They highlighted the importance of external interactions in learning outcomes.

Despite CL has been studied in different subjects and areas using different ways to do things (e.g., Jenni & Mauriel, 2004), its' implementation in the Iraqi EFL context (Abbas&Albakri, 2019) has not received much attention, as far as the researchers are aware. Students in CL groups regulate their own and others' knowledge differently, which can affect how well they function and achieve their goals (Wu, 2019). Furthermore, listening issues

in the EFL setting of Iraq are well-known, and they include linguistic (vocabulary, grammar) as well as psychological (poor motivation, low self-confidence, and high levels of listening anxiety) challenges. It is clear how vital listening skills are to EFL learning. The effect of CL on the listening comprehension of Iraqi EFL learners was the study issue examined. Investigating CL's potential in teaching and learning EFL is crucial for several reasons. Considerable research has been conducted in various social contexts to support CL pedagogy's academic and other benefits across different topic areas. Many studies have been undertaken to alter conventional teaching strategies and make them more engaging for students studying English as a second language. This will facilitate their language learning process. According to research, using novel teaching strategies like CL rather than more conventional ones is preferable for teachers and students. Teachers and students can collaborate and communicate more thanks to CL.

In light of the problems above, this study sought to address the following research topics to close any gaps in the body of literature and achieve its goals:

1. Do Iraqi undergraduate intermediate EFL learners' listening performance significantly improve when collaborative learning techniques are used in their classes?
2. What are the attitudes of Iraqi intermediate EFL learners towards collaborative learning techniques used in their classes?

3. Method

3.1 Design

This descriptive pre-experimental study was carried out among TEFL students at the BA level. One or more experimental groups will be watched against specific treatments as part of the pre-experimental design. The comparison group in the pre-experimental design might not exist. The study was conducted at the University of Kufa in Najaf, Iraq. The variables of the study were CL and listening comprehension.

3.2 Participants

This descriptive pre-experimental study was carried out with 60 Iraqi male and female students with the age range of 20- 25, at BA level, their major was teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) at the University of Kufa, College of Education in Najaf, Iraq. The participants were native speakers of Arabic language. They were selected non-randomly by the researchers through the convenience sampling method.

Table 1. Characteristics the students participants

No.	The year of the study	Age	Female	Male
60	Sophomores	20- 25	30	30

3.3 Instruments

To meet the objectives of the present study, the following instruments were used:

1-Real 3 listening and speaking (intermediate) book.

2-Pre and Post-test listening. 3-CL questionnaire.

The researchers piloted the pre-posttest and survey. Two experts from Kufa University were employed to assess the appropriateness and validity of the questionnaire and the test. They hold a PhD in English Language Teaching and have over 15 years of teaching experience. They decided the items in the questionnaire and questions in the test were related and appropriate to the study participants.

1-Real three listening and speaking (intermediate) book

The present study used Real 3 listening and speaking (intermediate) to examine the students' listening skills. Miles Craven wrote this book, usually used in most universities and institutes worldwide to improve learners' listening skills. Researchers in other countries have used this book to enhance students' listening skills. Also, it was the book recommended by most EFL teachers and supervisors of the English institutes in Iraq. This book contained 16 units and covered many topics, and all were taught using CL strategies in the classroom context.

2-Pre and Post-test listening

To pre-test and post-test, the participants' listening skills, a listening test adopted from Free Practice Tests for learners of English was used. This test contained listening comprehension items at the end of the test; the listening level of the participants was assessed at a CEF level (A2 to C2) (Appendix B). They completed this test in about 20 minutes. There were four sections in this test. The first section was a phone call from a customer. The

second section was a student discussion. The third one was a team meeting about diversity. The last listening section was about weather forecasts. There were 24 questions in the listening section. Before conducting the main tests, pilot studies with a cohort of students (N=30) validated the test questions. As well as experts' views to indicate the validity of it. In addition, Cronbach's Alpha was used to test the reliability of the test.

The results of Cronbach's Alpha are shown in Table 2. to examine the test's internal consistency.

Table 2.

Results of Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient

	Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Pre-test Listening	24	.900**
Post-test Listening	24	.925**

3- "Questionnaire for Students' Attitudes toward the CL Techniques in the Classroom.

A questionnaire was utilized to assess the perceived effectiveness of the group's collective leadership (Appendix A). This questionnaire was modified from the "Team Effectiveness Diagnostic" developed by The London Leadership Academy, National Health Service. The survey comprised 56 questions, and students rated each issue on a 5-point scale from strongly disagree to agree strongly. Students were required to select the response that closely matched their thoughts for each sentence in the closed-ended section (Appendix A). The researchers verified the amended questionnaire through a pilot study involving 25 participants before completing the research. The researchers selected 15

students for the pilot study using convenience sampling from the same setting. The researchers assessed the internal reliability of the questionnaire using Cronbach Alpha, yielding a value of .81, indicating an adequate level of dependability. The questionnaire was originally in English but was translated into Arabic by the researchers to facilitate participant comprehension. The questionnaire included purpose and goals, roles, team procedures, relationships, intergroup interactions, problem-solving, passion and commitment, and skills and learning. The validity of the questionnaire was tested using a pilot study and experts' opinions. Cronbach's Alpha was utilized to assess the internal consistency of the questionnaire. SPSS software version 26 was used to analyze the data.

The results of Cronbach's Alpha are shown in Table 3. to examine the scale's internal consistency.

Table 3.

Results of Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient

	Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Attitudes of EFL about CL Technique in the Classroom	56	.891

3.4 Procedure

For data collection, 60 Iraqi EFL learners at BA level who have had the courses Listening and Speaking 1 and 2, were invited to participate in the study. The researchers obtained consent from the participants. They guaranteed the participants that their anonymity would be maintained. They were provided with a full description of the research aim and processes to make them familiar with the content and the aim of the study.

The instructors taught the participants for one semester of the (2021-2022) academic year after dividing them into two groups, each group has 30 learners (15 male and 15 female). The semester consisted of 16 sessions, each session took 1.5 hours. The study occurred at the University of Kufa, College of Education in Najaf, Iraq.

Before the treatment period, the participants took part in a listening pre-test to check their scores before conducting the treatment period. The listening pre-test was adopted from "Free Practice Tests for Learners of English" assessed the participants' listening skills. The instructors used speaker to make sure that the sound reaches all the participants. The participants completed the listening pre-test in 40 minutes. Moreover, the instructors started teaching Real 3 listening and speaking book. The intermediate level of the book was selected because it corresponded to the participants' current intermediate level.

The semester was started by putting students into two groups. Later, the instructors group the learners into small groups, each group has 5 learners, the learners were asked to complete some tasks, which were related to the content of the course. Some of

those assigned tasks had to be done collaboratively during class time, while the rest had to be completed before the next class. Students in groups had to solve, find, and review their answers with group members to reach a consensus. The final products were jointly produced. Students turned to group members and sometimes to other groups and shared their responses. Pair or group discussions, completing shared tasks in groups regarding the course content, which was mainly the listening skills, and sometimes activities of a competitive nature were done during the treatment period.

The treatment period lasted for 16 sessions once a week. Every session lasted for one and a half an hour. The instructors every session taught one unit of the book applying CL procedure. Along with the basic requirements of the book, they also tried to work on the important grammatical points of the book as well. This book contains 16 units and totally at the end of the treatment period, all the units were covered. After the treatment period, the participants completed the listening post-test. It was identical to the pre-test. The participants completed the test in about 40 minutes.

After the above-mentioned steps, to go through eliciting stage, questionnaire for Students' attitudes toward the CL techniques in the classroom was administered through WhatsApp application, Researchers made the questionnaire available to the students by providing the URL to the students and they were required to fill it and send it back to the researchers. The questionnaire was translated into Arabic. They did it within 3 days. Prior to use in the current study, the questionnaire was piloted with a cohort of students from the same context.

3.5 Results

Results of the First Research Question:

Q1: Iraqi intermediate EFL learners' listening performance in collaborative learning.

After using CL approaches, descriptive statistics were computed for the participants' pre-test and post-test listening scores. Table 4 presents the descriptive statistics data.

Table 4.

Descriptive Statistics of the Participants' Pre- and Post-Tests Listening Scores after the Collaborative Learning Techniques Used

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Pair 1 Post-test Listening	18.27	60	1.04
Pre-test Listening	12.18	60	1.59

As Table 4. demonstrates, The individuals' post-test listening scores had a mean of 18.27 and a standard deviation of 1.04, while their pre-test listening scores had a mean of 12.18 and a standard deviation of 1.59.

The researchers used the paired samples t-test to determine if there was a significant difference between the participants' pre- and post-test listening scores in the CL lessons.

. Table 5. exhibits the results of this test.

Table 5.

Paired Samples t-test for the Participants' Pre- and post-test listening Scores in the Collaborative Learning Classes

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Post-test Listening - Pre-test Listening	6.08	2.23	.29	5.51	6.66	21.160	59	.000

The results in Table 5 showed a significant difference, $t(59)=21.160$, $p=.000 < .05$, in the participants' pre- and post-test listening scores following the application of CL approaches in the classes. Hence, the null hypothesis was disproved, indicating that CL comes notably impact the listening comprehension of Iraqi undergraduate intermediate EFL learners.

Results of the second research question

Q2: Iraqi intermediate EFL learners' attitudes toward collaborative learning

Descriptive frequencies, percentages, and mean values were calculated to analyses the items in the questionnaire for the second study question (refer to Table 6).

Table 6.

Descriptive Statistics Regarding Participants' Attitudes about CL Techniques in the Classroom

Learners Attitudes Toward the Efficacy of CL Techniques in the Classroom				
SD	D	Un	A	SA

Listening Performance of Iraqi Intermediate EFL Learners in Collaborative Learning and their Attitudes Towards it

Item Numbers	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)
Item1	7 (11.7)	9(15.0)	11(18.3)	21(32.4)
Item2	6(10.0)	11(18.3)	12(20.0)	15(25.0)
Item3	6(10.0)	12(20.0)	11(18.3)	17(28.3)
Item4	5(8.3)	11(18.3)	12(20.0)	16(26.7)
Item5	7(11.7)	11(18.3)	11(18.3)	12(20.0)
Item6	5(8.3)	10(16.7)	14(23.3)	16(26.7)
Item7	5(8.3)	10(16.7)	13(21.7)	17(28.3)
Item8	8(13.3)	11(18.3)	8(13.3)	17(28.3)
Item9	8(13.3)	13(21.7)	8(13.3)	16(26.7)
Item10	5(8.3)	8(13.3)	8(13.3)	23(38.3)
Item11	4(6.7)	9(15.0)	15(25.0)	17(28.3)
Item12	6(10.0)	9(15.0)	8(13.3)	15(25.0)
Item13	9(15.0)	11(18.3)	14(23.3)	15(25.0)
Item14	5(8.3)	12(20.0)	13(21.7)	16(26.7)
Item15	8(13.3)	9(15.0)	10(16.7)	18(30.0)
Item16	3(5.0)	11(18.3)	18(30.0)	13(21.7)
Item17	7(11.7)	6(10.0)	10(16.7)	14(23.3)
Item18	5(8.3)	12(20.0)	12(20.0)	16(26.7)
Item19	12(20.0)	11(18.3)	12(20.0)	12(20.0)
Item20	16(10.0)	9(15.0)	12(20.0)	35(41.1)
Item21	7(11.7)	6(10.0)	15(25.0)	15(25.0)
Item22	4(6.7)	9(15.0)	13(21.7)	21(35.0)
Item23	8(13.3)	7(11.7)	13(21.7)	15(25.0)
Item24	8(13.3)	8(13.3)	16(26.7)	16(26.7)
Item 25	7 (11.7)	9(15.0)	11(18.3)	19(31.7)
Item 26	6(10.0)	11(18.3)	12(20.0)	15(25.0)
Item 27	5(10.0)	11(20.0)	11(18.3)	17(28.3)
Item 28	5(8.3)	10(16.7)	14(23.3)	16(26.7)
Item 29	5(8.3)	10(16.7)	13(21.7)	17(28.3)
Item 30	5(8.3)	11(18.3)	12(20.0)	16(26.7)
Item 31	8(13.3)	11(18.3)	8(13.3)	17(28.3)
Item 32	8(13.3)	13(21.7)	8(13.3)	16(26.7)
Item 33	5(8.3)	8(13.3)	8(13.3)	29(38.9)
Item 34	4(6.7)	9(15.0)	15(25.0)	17(28.3)
Item 35	6(10.0)	9(15.0)	8(13.3)	15(25.0)
Item 36	5(8.3)	12(20.0)	13(21.7)	16(26.7)

Item 37	5(8.3)	12(20.0)	12(20.0)	15(25.0)	16(26.7)
Item 38	5(8.3)	12(20.0)	12(20.0)	15(25.0)	16(26.7)
Item 39	12(20.0)	11(18.3)	12(20.0)	13(21.7)	12(20.0)
Item 40	6(10.0)	9(15.0)	12(20.0)	16(26.7)	17(28.3)
Item 41	4(6.7)	9(15.0)	13(21.7)	13(21.7)	21(35.0)
Item 42	8(13.3)	7(11.7)	13(21.7)	17(28.3)	15(25.0)
Item 43	8(13.3)	8(13.3)	16(26.7)	12(20.0)	16(26.7)
Item 44	7 (11.7)	9(15.0)	11(18.3)	14(23.3)	19(31.7)
Item 45	6(10.0)	11(18.3)	12(20.0)	16(26.7)	15(25.0)
Item 46	6(10.0)	12(20.0)	11(18.3)	14(23.3)	17(28.3)
Item 47	5(8.3)	10(16.7)	14(23.3)	15(25.0)	16(26.7)
Item 48	5(8.3)	11(18.3)	12(20.0)	16(26.7)	16(26.7)
Item 49	5(8.3)	8(13.3)	8(13.3)	16(26.7)	23(38.3)
Item 50	4(6.7)	9(15.0)	15(25.0)	15(25.0)	17(28.3)
Item 51	6(10.0)	9(15.0)	8(13.3)	22(36.7)	15(25.0)
Item 52	5(8.3)	12(20.0)	12(20.0)	15(25.0)	16(26.7)
Item 53	12(20.0)	11(18.3)	12(20.0)	13(21.7)	12(20.0)
Item 54	6(10.0)	9(15.0)	12(20.0)	16(26.7)	17(28.3)
Item 55	6(10.0)	12(20.0)	11(18.3)	14(23.3)	17(28.3)
Item 56	5(8.3)	12(20.0)	12(20.0)	15(25.0)	16(26.7)

Note: SD= Strongly Disagree, D= Disagree, UN= Undecided, A= Agree, SA= Strongly Agree

The data in Table 6 indicates that the most significant efficacy of CL was associated with item 20 (41.1%), which highlights open and honest communication within the team, followed by item 33 (38.9%). They consistently produce solid and measurable results, item 1 (32.4%), stating that their team has a meaningful, shared purpose.

In total, experts believe that in the purpose and goals group, items 33 and 49 had the highest percentage among the other items in purpose and goals groups; it means that most of the students strongly agree with this item (65%), indicating that the missions and their goals well associated with the organizations' goals and

missions and they consistently produce strong results. On the other hand, a few students (21.6%) strongly disagree that their goals and missions weren't well associated with the organizations' goals and missions. Also, in the roles group, half of the students strongly agree with item 42 (53.3%). When team members' roles change, specific plans are put in place to assist them in taking on their new responsibilities. However, 25% of students strongly disagreed with the team members' role change and thought that specific plans were in place to help them adjust to their new duties. Also, students following item 42 and item 50 (53.3%) attracted strong agreement among the roles group items. In the team processes group, almost all students strongly agree with items 35 and 51 (61.7%) and believe they do it effectively when choosing agreement in decision-making. Still, a few students (25%) strongly disagreed with these items, noting that their team has mechanisms to monitor its results. In the team relationship group, more than half of the students strongly agreed with item 12(61.7%), assuming that team members are effective listeners; however, 25 % strongly disagreed. Following this item, students (53.4%) strongly agreed that the team members appreciate one another's unique capabilities, and 26.6 % strongly disagreed. Again, in the intergroup relations group, students (53.3%) strongly agree with item 21, noting that they communicate effectively with other groups, and 21.7% of students indicated their disagreement. Also, following item 21, more than half of the students (53.3%) showed their strong agreement with item 29, stating their team has established supportive and trusting relationships with other teams; 25 % showed strong disagreement with this item, that says, their team has found supportive and trusting other teams. Notably, 56.7% of students strongly agreed with item 22, and 21.7 % Strongly

disagreed with the statement and clarified that team members independently addressed and resolved difficulties among themselves without requiring the intervention of the team leader. Additionally, in the group characterized by passion and commitment, approximately 55% of students strongly agreed, and 31.6% disagreed with statements regarding team members going beyond requirements, taking the initiative, and feeling a strong sense of accomplishment in their work. Items 8 and 40 exhibit a higher proportion than those in the skills and learning group. Based on item 8, over 55% of students strongly affirmed possessing the necessary skills for efficient job performance, whereas 31.6% strongly opposed this notion. Next was item 48, with 53.4% of students agreeing that team members embrace continuous improvement as a way of life, while 26.6% strongly disagreed. Table 6 displays the average and standard deviation of the disagreement and agreement.

Table 7.

The Means and Standard Deviation of the Disagreement and Agreement

	Options	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Attitudes Toward the Efficacy of CCL	Disagreement	6	11.99	2.04
	Agreement	54	31.18	3.24

Table 7 shows the average score and variability of participants' disagreement about their views towards CL approaches in the classroom. (M = 11.99, SD = 2.04) and the mean score and standard deviation of the learners' agreement with the attitudes about CL techniques in the classroom were (M = 31.18, SD = 3.24), respectively. The higher mean showed the participants' agreement on the efficacy of CL techniques in the classroom. Thus, the higher

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agreement rate shows the overall positive attitudes about CL techniques in the classroom.

To see whether the differences were significant or not, the independent samples t-test was run (Table 8).

Table 8.

Independent Samples t-Test for Participants' Agreement and Disagreement about CL Techniques in the Classroom

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Attitudes Toward the Efficacy of CCL	Equal variances assumed	1.168	.279	-19.899	59	.000	-18.42	1.94	-22.71	-15.89
	Equal variances are not assumed.			-19.918	53.213	.000	-18.42	1.94	-24.30	-15.11

The p-value for Levene's Test for Equal variances in Table 8 is .279, indicating that the variances are believed to be equal and the statistics in the first row should be utilized. The t-test results showed a statistically significant difference between participants' agreement and disagreement on their attitudes about CL procedures ($t(59) = -19.899, p < .05$).

3.5 Discussion

The present study aimed to consider Iraqi EFL learners' listening performance in CL, focusing on their attitudes toward its contribution to the classroom.

Based on the qualitative study, the first research question sought whether Iraqi undergraduate intermediate EFL learners' listening performance significantly improved when CL techniques were used in their classes. This research question showed a significant disparity in the participants' listening ratings before and after

implementing CL approaches in the classes. Thus, CL has significantly impacted the listening comprehension of Iraqi undergraduate intermediate EFL learners. Johnson et al. (2007) suggested that students in collaborative teams engage in discussions to build and enhance their understanding of the material and create shared mental models of complex concepts. Furthermore, as previously mentioned, the crucial aspect of language acquisition is listening actively to and comprehending spoken words. (Mulyadi et al., 2022).

Chen's (2005) research on 89 Taiwanese secondary school students demonstrated that education in comprehension strategies improved the students' skills in grasping primary ideas, making inferences, and locating answers to specific queries. Overall, they excelled while employing CL methods.

Salih and Abdelameer (2022) attempted to explore the significance of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) as a strategy applicable in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) setting. They utilized Barros's perspective on CL as collaboration and some of Partanpichet's public speaking accomplishments to evaluate academic advantages, social benefits, general abilities, and drawbacks. The participants were affiliated with the University of Baghdad in Iraq. The study's results indicated a statistically significant association between the progress of Iraqi EFL learners in abilities and CL. It aligns with the results of the current investigation.

Kluger and Itzchakov (2022) tried to investigate the improvement of listening skills in a CL environment. The results obtained from their study showed that the participants' listening skills were

enhanced using the CL technique, which confirms the results of the present study.

Ismail and Abdul Aziz (2020) tried to enhance comprehension of instructional tactics for listening through group work and assignment completion. The group lacked proficiency in listening during spoken talks. The current study's conclusions do not align with the findings regarding the first research question.

Caspersz and Stasinska (2015) conducted a study to investigate if a formal listening intervention may enhance students' comprehension of a task. They attempted to outline an intervention and activities related to CL that can improve students' practical listening skills. Their findings demonstrated that the group utilizing CL methods outperformed their listening abilities. They are similar to the findings of the current investigation.

Based on the quantitative study, the second research question sought to consider whether Iraqi undergraduate intermediate EFL learners have positive attitudes toward CL techniques used in their classes. The results showed that about half of the students had the idea that CL techniques improved their learning; the highest contribution of the CL was related to the statement that communication in their team was open and honest, and then the statement that showed they consistently produced solid and measurable results, and then they stated that their team had a meaningful, shared purpose. According to Chen et al. (2021), CL strategies in the class lead to better learning outcomes, positive perspectives, and wiser performance, which is in line with the present study's findings.

As Colbeck et al. (2000) showed, group work allowed students to learn by doing rather than listening. Students used learning strategies and solved problems to create the projects. Overall, the participants showed their satisfaction with collaborative activities

in the classroom context. The current study's results align with participants' favourable sentiments toward the CL technique. Moreover, Cheung and Winterbottom (2021) found that collaborative work leads to improved learning outcomes, positive attitudes, and enhanced decision-making abilities, aligning with the current study's findings. They also found that participants achieved significantly better performance when working in teams than independently. Furthermore, their mediation analysis provided suggestive evidence that teamwork enhanced performance by stimulating the team to work harder and more creatively. It is in the same direction as the findings of the present study.

Othman and Murad (2015) conducted a study to find out what Kurdish students in Iraq think about the good and bad points of using computers inside the classroom. The research was conducted on a sample of 100 Kurdish university students who had been engaged in group work at institutions in Kurdistan, specifically at Zakho, Dohuk, Salahaddin, and Sulaimani universities, for a minimum of two years. The results from both tools indicated that students had positive opinions such as "enhanced communication," "shared interest in group work," "members help clarify challenging concepts," and "efficient task completion in group work." Conversely, negative opinions included "some members prefer to be passive and quiet," "some members exhibit reluctance to work," "group work is perceived as unproductive due to off-topic discussions and lack of consensus," and "students rely heavily on one another."

Johnson and Johnson's (2014) study reported that CL created positive attitudes toward the content learning experience at universities. They proved that using CL groups gave students new

chances that they wouldn't have if they worked alone or against each other. In groups, students could talk together and learn from each other to better understand what they were studying and make sense of complicated ideas. The group members can help the students learn by ensuring they do their work, telling them how they're doing, and encouraging them to keep learning.

Conclusion

This qualitative research tried to investigate Iraqi EFL learners' listening performance in CL, focusing on their attitudes toward its contribution to the classroom. The participants' positive attitudes suggest that by providing learners with CL techniques in the classroom context, we can improve learners' learning outcomes. Researchers and administrators in the EFL field should think about the learning situation and understand how using CL strategies in the classroom can help students improve their listening skills. This study shows that the way students interact with each other can affect how well they learn. By talking and discussing, students can better solve problems and remember things when they listen. Martinez et al. (2016) found that there is a relationship between being in a positive and fun environment and performing well in academic contexts.

As Sarobol (2012) stated, CL strategies should stimulate interactions and learning outcomes within the EFL context. As a result, preparing teachers and administrators to increase their knowledge of the efficacy of CL along with appropriate education of learners sounds vital (Al-Yaseen, 2012). It is the responsibility of learners to learn by themselves, seeking help from others. A very influential operant in the valuable application of CL is increasing learners' awareness of some skills, such as helping

others, raising questions, giving feedback, and critically analyzing the process of CL.

When the following researchers report on their research about using CL strategies, they should provide all the details about their studies. This includes basic statistical information and other supporting details to analyze more studies. These research findings can help us understand how to use CL strategies in the classroom to improve education quality. We hope that this knowledge will make learning better. Future studies can use variables such as team interaction between incongruous and congruous group work, group size, and teacher intervention.

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Appendices

Appendix A

"Questionnaire for Students' Attitudes toward the CL Techniques in the Classroom

How confident are you in your group's ability to excel in a collaborative learning course? Rate your responses to the following statements. 1 (Strongly Disagree), 2 (Disagree), 3 (Neutral), 4 (Agree), 5 (Strongly Agree)

"Read through the following statements carefully. <i>Listening Performance of Iraqi Intermediate EFL Learners in Collaborative Learning and their Attitudes Towards it</i>	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Our team has a significant, common goal.					
2. Team members have a clear understanding of their roles.					
3. Team collaboration leads to successful problem-solving outcomes.					
4. Team members value each other's distinct abilities.					
5. We may handle problems with other teams in a collaborative manner.					
6. Team members assume personal accountability for the efficiency of our team.					
7. Our team's work inspires individuals to perform at their highest level.					
8. We possess the necessary skills to perform our tasks proficiently.					
9. We are deeply dedicated to a common goal.					
10. When an individual's role changes, a deliberate attempt is made to define it clearly for all team members.					
11. We promptly handle and solve concerns.					
12. Team members exhibit proficient listening skills.					
13. We aim to prioritize our tasks to accommodate the requirements of other work teams.					
14. Team members exhibit a positive and determined attitude when faced with challenging challenges.					
15. My team feels a great sense of achievement about our work.					

16. We always ponder how to improve today's efforts tomorrow.					
17. We prioritize overarching strategic matters as well as daily tasks.					
18. Team members comprehend each other's responsibilities.					
19. Team members are incentivized for their collaborative efforts.					
20. Communication in our organization is transparent and truthful.					
21. We have proficient communication with different groups.					
22. Team members proactively address their concerns without requiring the team leader's intervention.					
23. Individuals take pride in being members of our team.					
24. As a team, we consistently strive to enhance cycle time, speed to market, customer responsiveness, and other essential performance indicators.					
25. We establish and achieve ambitious objectives.					
26. Everyone highly values each member's contribution to the team.					
27. Group meetings are highly efficient.					
28. Our team members have confidence in one another.					
29. Our team has developed reliable and encouraging partnerships with other teams.					

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30. We rarely complain about matters beyond our control.					
31. Team members often exceed expectations and readily show initiative.					
32. We consider all occurrences, even errors, as chances for acquiring knowledge and development.					
33. We routinely achieve robust, quantifiable outcomes.					
34. Team members prevent redundancy and ensure clarity on task assignments.					
35. Our team has systems in place to oversee its outcomes.					
36. Team members assist each other in handling challenges or resolving issues.					
37. We strive to align our goals with those of other work groups.					
38. Team members provide and receive constructive comments.					
39. We collaborate to draw in and keep high-performing individuals.					
40. We utilize many types of training to maintain our current abilities.					
41. We ensure that our work contributes to the organization's objectives.					
42. When team members' roles change, precise strategies are implemented to assist them in taking on their new duties.					
43. Our team operates with high flexibility to accommodate evolving requirements.					
44. We can resolve disagreements without harming relationships.					

45. Our relationships with other teams are valuable and generate positive outcomes.					
46. Team members are confident in their understanding of expectations and feel proud when they do tasks successfully.					
47. Our team is enthusiastic about its impact on the organisation's competitive strength.					
48. Team members fully adopt continuous improvement as a fundamental aspect of their daily routine.					
49. My team's mission and goals closely align with the organisation's mission and goals.					
50. Overlapping or shared tasks and responsibilities do not provide challenges for team members.					
51. When we opt for consensus decision-making, we do so efficiently.					
52. Team members exhibit elevated levels of collaboration and mutual support.					
53. Our group's objectives align with those of other groups.					
54. Team members contemplate the consequences of their actions on others when making decisions.					
55. My team is proud of its achievements and hopeful for the future.					
56. Team members strive to utilize best-practice practices.					

Appendix B

Listening comprehension pre-test and post-test

"Listening 1: A phone call from a customer"

"Are the sentences true or false?"

1. The delivery is still pending.

True

False

2. Andrea is experiencing cash flow problems and requires an extension for payment.

True

False

3. Andrea typically requests an extension of the payment terms.

True

False

4. Andrea has a new order to place, which is larger than the last one.

True

False

5. Junko can increase the payment terms for the most recent order to 60 days.

True

False

6. Junko will email Andrea a confirmation.

True

False

Listening 2: A student discussion

"Complete the sentences.

Gravity	nitrogen	support	astronomical	frozen	same
---------	----------	---------	--------------	--------	------

1. Most people think Mars can----- human life.
2. We measure distances in space using -----units.
3. The two planets aren't the----- color.
4. Most of the water on Mars is probably -----.
5. The air on Earth is mostly made up of----- -
6. ----- On Mars, it is just over one-third as strong as on Earth.

Listening 3: A team meeting about diversity

Are the statements accurate or inaccurate?

1. The team has expanded and diversified during the past year.

True

False

2. Mutual respect and appreciation exist among all team members.

True

False

3. They will establish a workplace charter to promote diversity, equality, and inclusion.

True

False

4. The entire team will be involved in writing the charter.

True

False

5. They had conducted successful sessions earlier this year.

True

False

6. Nina has already disseminated some favourable research.

True

False

Listening 4: The Weather Forecast

Are the sentences true or false?

1. Rain will begin at lunchtime today in the eastern region.

True

False

2. The weather in the north-west will be more severe than in the south.

True

False

3. Thunder is expected in Leeds tonight.

True

False

4. The majority of England will experience high temperatures this week.

True

False

5. Precipitation will shift from northern to southern regions throughout the weekend.

True

False

6. It will remain hot during the downpour.

True

False

Appendix C Statistics Tables

Table 1.

KMO and Bartlett's Test

	KMO	Bartlett	
		Chi-Square	Sig.
Attitudes of the Students Toward the Efficacy of CL Techniques in the Classroom	.911	3394.639	0.000

Table 2.

Total Variance Explained

Component 1	Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
	17.689	73.002	73.004

Table 3.

Rotated Component Matrix

Attitudes of Iraqi Students about CL Technique in the Class	Component 1
Q1	.761
Q2	.679
Q3	.700
Q4	.801
Q5	.732
Q6	.771
Q7	.721
Q8	.803

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Q9	.822
Q10	.759
Q11	.769
Q12	.801
Q13	.818
Q14	.859
Q15	.817
Q16	.712
Q17	.723
Q18	.633
Q19	.648
Q20	.699
Q21	.609
Q22	.743
Q23	.712
Q24	.789
Q25	.698
Q26	.802
Q27	.871
Q 28	.812
Q29	.765
Q30	.789
Q31	.825
Q33	.845
Q33	.711
Q34	.811
Q35	.791
Q36	.847
Q37	.802
Q38	.712
Q39	.801
Q40	.816
Q41	.799
Q42	.874
Q43	.789

Q44	.609
Q45	.745
Q46	.678
Q47	.732
Q48	.647
Q49	.816
Q50	.876
Q51	.678
Q52	.699
Q53	.874
Q54	.647
Q55	.800
Q56	.806

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Table 4. Overall Frequency and Percentage for Eight Subcategories of CL Technique

	SD	D	Un	A	SA
<i>Total</i>					
Purpose and	43	62	69	111	
Goals		143	428		
32.30%	10.21 %	14.70%	16.39%	26.40%	100%
<hr/>					
Roles	38	67	87	110	
	118	420			
28.07%	9.05%	15.95%	20.72%		26.21%
	100%				
<hr/>					
Team Processes	47	69	81	114	
109	420				
100%	10.97%	16.99%	19.30%	26.74%	26.00%
<hr/>					
Team Relationships	49	72	82	118	
	133	454			
100%	8.90%	16.77%	19.19%	26.30%	28.84%
<hr/>					
Intergroup	51	72	89	106	102
Relations	420				
24.29%	12.14%	17.13%	21.19%		25.25%
	100%				
<hr/>					
Problem-Solving	36	75	87	103	
		119	420		
	8.56%	17.86%	20.71%	24.53%	
			28.34%	100%	

Passion and 420	52	70	81	105	112
Commitment 27.69%	12.37%	17.68%	20.29%		21.97%
	100%				
Skills and 421	43	75	88	104	111
Learning	10.21%	17.84%	20.48%	25.02%	26.45%
	100				

Table 5. The Means and Standard Deviations for the Eight Subcategories in CL Classrooms

Skill	Mean	Standard Deviation
"Purpose and Goals	3.09	1.22
Roles	3.10	1.22
Team Processes	3.09	1.20
Team Relationships	3.18	1.23
Intergroup Relations	3.17	1.23
Problem Solving	3.22	1.23
Passion and Commitment	3.22	1.22
Skills and Learning"	3.25	1.21