

Attitudes of Students and Teachers Towards Using Technology in Cooperative Learning Activities in ESL Classes

أراء الطلاب والمدرسين في استخدام التكنولوجيا بالأنشطة التعاونية في صفوف
تعلم اللغة الانجليزية كلغة ثانية

by

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of the requirements for the degree of
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Abstract

The current study aims to explore the attitudes of high school students and their teachers towards using technology in cooperative learning activities during ESL classes. For this purpose, the TAM model was used to design surveys to explore the stakeholders' attitudes. The study is conducted in an American school in the UAE, and the researcher adopted a quantitative method that involves two weeks of technology intervention in a cooperative learning setting. A survey is distributed to teachers and students to explore their attitudes. The findings suggest that most teachers and students have positive opinions about integrating technology into ESL cooperative learning activities.

Keywords: ESL, EFL, school students, cooperative learning, teaching with technology.

ملخص الدراسة

تهدف الدراسة الحالية الي استكشاف مواقف طلاب المدارس الثانوية ومعلميهم تجاه استخدام التكنولوجيا في التعلم والأنشطة التعاونية خلال فصول اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة ثانية. أجريت الدراسة في مدرسة أمريكية في الإمارات العربية المتحدة ، واعتمدت الباحثة أسلوبًا كمّيًا يتضمن أسبوعين من التدخل التكنولوجي في بيئة التعلم التعاوني ثم توزيع استبيان على المعلمين والطلاب لتسجيل مواقفهم وأرائهم. وتشير النتائج إلى أن معظم المعلمين والطلاب لديهم آراء إيجابية حول دمج التكنولوجيا في أنشطة التعلم التعاوني.

الكلمات المفتاحية : طلاب المدارس، التعلم التعاوني، التدريس باستخدام التكنولوجيا، اللغة الانجليزية كلغة ثانية

Dedication

I dedicate the efforts in this dissertation to my family members, my parents, my brother and sister, and my three children Ahmed, Yousef and Malik.

I want to especially thank my mum, who has always been very supportive and who always remained the reason behind my passion for learning and my successes.

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1. Chapter One: Introduction

Today, English is a dominant language for international communication around the world, and this reflects the importance of ESL/EFL classes. Culture and educational changes in UAE have changed the mix of ELL learners in a typical classroom. Although students attend classes of the same grade level, they come from different backgrounds; they are different and very diverse, emotionally and behaviourally. In addition, they do not read or speak the target language at the same level. As a result, traditionally teaching them will not help to improve their language level. There must be new and innovative ways to teach these students, so they excel in the target language. Educators realised the amendment of using technology effectively to ensure that each student reaches his highest level of achievement. The application of technology in ESL classrooms has varied from using the simplest methods to the most complicated ones.

Due to Globalization and the achievements of the country, UAE became one of the most attractive markets in the Middle East. Different people from different places around the world have chosen to settle in the UAE with their families to work or invest. As a result, UAE became a multi-cultural community, and English is the language mostly used by people from various cultures to communicate both verbally and in orally in different settings. Not only in everyday social life activities but also in most workplaces, universities, schools and other places. The number of English learners is growing as many families realised that it is vital for their children to be proper English speakers and users for their university acceptance and to guarantee well-paid jobs in the future. Thus, English as the second language became an essential core subject in all UAE schools regardless of the schools' curriculum or orientation. English is studied in American, British, Arabic, and Indian schools. Many professional educators realised that they should replace their old methods of teaching that are mainly paper-based to enhance the students' ability to communicate and to provide them with better working opportunities after graduation. Recently, the need for innovative ways to teach ESL students is noticeably increasing. In contrast, the traditional way of teaching in which the teacher is the centre of attention and where languages are taught abstractly is approaching its end. Moreover, new terms as cooperative learning, student-centred classes, and technology integration in classrooms are now becoming a crucial topic in all UAE schools.

1.1 Background Information

There are different school types in the UAE. There are government schools and private schools. To start with, governmental schools follow a local curriculum and have a large population of local students. While private schools follow different curriculum like American, British, and others. The use of technology in most types of UAE schools is encouraged and preferred. The education stakeholders in the UAE prefer to use technology and follow the latest trends in technology and pedagogy to improve learning, so the education sector is in a continuous effort for improvement and enhancement.

According to empirical research, students do not learn appropriately in class unless they are involved and engaged. At the same time, educators have an increasing pressure to adjust the curriculum appropriately to come up with differentiated outcomes that cater to the diversity of the learners' needs, yet to maintain the overarching standards of the skill. Hence, to design the learning activities and assess the students' products to ensure that they are demonstrating the expected progress. Teachers notice that although they are exerting themselves to engage to stay engaged in class to improve their students' language skills, the number of the students who fail to meet the standards of their grade level is on the rise. Furthermore, according to the literature, technology is one of the best ways to engage students in classrooms as it involves auditory and visual learners. Most teachers have challenging classes occupied with students from various backgrounds, and they have their unique learning styles. However, all of them share the same interest in technology as it is a part of their daily life. Using technology in classrooms tackles most of the students learning types and reaches all the multiple learning intelligence (Zulkepli, et al., 2018).

1.2 Significance of Research

1.2.1 The Significance of the Topic

The current study is about technology with a specific focus on cooperative learning activities that used to be paper-based. It is obvious that the modern technological ways of teaching ESL students include the use of tablets, internet resources, several programs and platforms, power

points, online tasks and assignments, videos, online dictionaries, and smartboards. Hence, teachers have different approaches regarding using multimedia and technology in classrooms. In other words, some of them integrate technology whenever it applies to their teaching contexts. An example on that can be listening and speaking classes; whereas, others believe that it is more useful to have entirely technological classes every day in which the students never use a pen or a paper in their learning; moreover, their books are uploaded on their tablets and all the learning activities are done online. According to Zulkepli, et al. (2018), there are many advantages of using modern technology in ESL teaching and learning. On the one hand, when using technology, teachers provide students with more enjoyable activities in class, for example, the teacher can instruct the students to search for information using online resources for project-based learning, to search for a common issue in the community, so students will be highly engaged and interested to practice what they have learned. Unlike the traditional teaching in which the students sit passively listening to their teacher talking, the active use of multimedia and technology in listening and speaking contexts encourages students to debate and discuss their ideas in pairs or groups according to their level. It also provides them with better opportunities to learn from each other's mistakes and promote their self-confidence as it increases their communications capacity. The teacher in class is no longer the only source of knowledge. On the contrary, the teacher acts as a facilitator who limits his/her (TTT) Teacher Talking Time to create a communication set and monitor the student's progress (Farrell, 2016). CAST, the centre of applied special technology by Vygotsky (1962- 1996) developed the universal learning design (UDL) a flexible approach to facilitate technology use effectively in class to provide each student with an individualised technological instructional plan that caters to his/her needs especially, students of determination (SOD). SOD students do not have to sit in class alienated because they cannot meet the course needs. The teacher can achieve the same learning outcome using a variety of technological activities for example, in a cooperative writing activity; the teacher can ask the students to write in a google sheet, use animated PowerPoint presentation or Google slides, audio-video to create video clips or screencasts. Teachers who regularly provide opportunities for their students to use technology become themselves more effective and knowledgeable in successfully assisting their students in technology use (Selvester, et al., 2006). Using technology in teaching English promotes students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Educators usually integrate pictures and

videos which address both the visual and auditory learners and provide them with a better understanding of the language platform. Furthermore, it insights the students to collect the clues and infer information beyond the scenes and adopt an analytical way of thinking (Abunowara, 2016). The teaching and learning process is not only limited inside the classrooms or during the usual official timing of school, as the learners can communicate online with their colleagues or teacher. They can actively engage in online searching methods to reach conclusions about their different learning topics. The learners can always listen to speeches or interviews to improve their communication skills.

1.2.2 The Significance of the Study

Having mentioned the benefits of technology in general and especially in ESL classrooms, it is clear that the current research study which focuses on the use of technology becomes very important and significant. The aim is to add to the existing knowledge of the current literature about the use of technology with a specific focus on cooperative learning activities which used to be paper-based and proved useful. Therefore, studying the effect of integrating technology into this type of activities will add to the existing knowledge about the effectiveness of the use of technology in this particular aspect. The current study aims at exploring the teachers' and the students' attitudes towards using technology in cooperative learning activities. No study was found on UAE high school students with the same aim; therefore, this study is unique, and it covers the gap in the literature. Therefore, the researcher wants to have solid findings on the attitudes of the most important stakeholder parties in the process of education; teachers and students to be able to suggest changes in the school's curriculum design and to suggest future research in the same area due to the importance of teaching with technology.

1.2.3 The Significance of the Study for Teachers

The study is significant for the teacher. Once they are aware of the many benefits offered by technology, and once they are convinced that technology can be very easy to use, it is expected that they will utilise it in their classes. Since it is empirically proven that using technology in education and especially in cooperative learning activities is very useful, therefore, this will lead to a better teaching and learning experience in the classroom. When teachers realise the many opportunities offered by technology in facilitating their students' learning, they will start looking for more resources by themselves, and they will be eager to develop in this area.

Therefore the final product will lead to an interesting classroom and more fruitful experience for both teachers and students.

1.2.4 The significance of the Study for Policymakers

The study is also significant to the policymakers. Policymakers are in constant search for the best practices that facilitate the teaching and learning process and the overall experience in the classroom. The results of the study shed light on the teachers' perceptions towards technology based on the perceived usefulness and the perceived easiness of use. Therefore, the results will pave the way for policymakers to invest more in the area of technology to improve the teaching and learning process in schools. They will also focus on creating a suitable learning environment for both teachers and students to be able to use technology and improve more. Therefore, policymakers should use the findings of this study to facilitate the use of technology in schools for teachers and students.

1.3 The Problem Statement

For the many benefits of technology in education, every classroom must utilize technology, whether by teachers or students. However, this is not always the case. Many teachers and students are not aware of the benefits offered by technology in the field of education and its ability to facilitate teaching and learning. Some also believe that using technology in class can be difficult or embarrassing especially for old generation teachers. They are intimidated by technology and worry that something might go wrong and affect their class time, quality or even their image in front of their students. For students, although they are tech-savvy, sometimes they ignore educational technology for similar reasons. They are worried that they do not know how to use it or they doubt if it is useful for them or not. This is problematic because, at our current time, the role of technology in education cannot be ignored or underestimated. Therefore, both teachers and students need to understand the many benefits offered by technology in education and how teaching with technology facilitates teaching and learning in and outside the classroom. They should also be aware of the easiness of the use of technology and their many advantages in creating a robust and interesting classroom environment. The current study focuses on these two aspects; the perceived usefulness of technology in education

and the perceived easiness of use with the aim of exploring teachers and students' attitudes to come up with the best practices to support both.

1.4 The Research Topic

The main focus of the current study is on teachers' and students' attitudes towards the effects of using technology in ESL cooperative learning activities. According to Slavin (1980, p.315), Cooperative learning can be defined as "classroom techniques in which students work on learning activities in small groups and receive rewards or recognition based on their group's performance." Therefore, it is an old concept that can be now integrated with technology in the process of teaching and learning. Technology efficiently helps educators to overcome some of the challenges they face in class when they integrate cooperative learning. Due to cultural and emotional reasons, many introvert students refuse to work with their peers and prefer to do the task individually. Technology provides interactive platforms on which they can work online with their peers without leaving their seats and without being shy. It provides the students with a continuous virtual environment that is not tied by the place or the school timing. Students engage in cognitively in-depth discussions, analyse, evaluate information and prepare valuable artefacts to convince their peers with their views about the topics.

1.5 Research Purpose and Research Questions

The overarching aim of the present study is to explore the attitudes of teachers and students towards the use of technology in activities that require collaboration. Based on this, two research questions were developed; the first research question is 1) what are the teachers' attitudes towards using technology in cooperative learning activities? And the second research question is 2) what are the students' attitudes towards using technology in cooperative learning activities? To answer these research questions, the researcher provides an intervention using technology in cooperative learning activities for two weeks, then and distribute a survey for both teachers and students to explore their attitudes towards the intervention. The researcher aims at exploring both the teachers and the students' level of acceptance towards technology that is used in cooperative learning. Based on the findings of the study, the researcher expects some important pedagogical implications that can be beneficial for policymakers and curriculum designers. The

researcher is also expecting to find out the challenges faced by both the students and the teachers in implementing cooperative learning activities using technology.

1.6 Outline of Thesis Chapters

The current study starts with an introduction about the purpose of the study and its significance then moves to give some background information about the topic of the study. The second chapter has the literature review and the theoretical framework. The third chapter will be about the methodology used in this study. The fourth chapter will be about the results obtained from the teachers' and students' surveys. The fifth chapter will be the discussion section that will show the links between the findings and the existing literature. The last chapter will present the conclusion of the study, and it will feature some recommendations for future research.

2. Chapter Two: Literature Review

In this chapter, the researcher discusses the theoretical framework and the theories behind the design of the study. After that, there is an analysis of the previous studies in the literature that are relevant to the current study. This chapter is thematically divided to show relevant studies about each important topic discussed in the study.

2.1 The Theoretical Framework

Cooperative learning is deeply rooted in the constructivism theory and in the social interdependence theory, according to Cobb (2016). Theories involved in those studies included but were not limited to the students' centred approach initiated by Vygotsky and Piaget, and the social interdependence theory by (Deutsch, 1949, 1962; Johnson and Johnson, 1989, 2005, 2009). The Social interdependence theory states that two kinds of social interdependence exist, positive which means cooperative and the other one is negative or in other words, competitive. The Positive interdependence, which means the cooperation, occurs when people realise that they can achieve their targets only when others in the same team achieve theirs. On the other hand, the negative interdependence or in other words, the competition occurs when people realise that they can achieve their targets only if others fail to do so. There is also the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), which is the base for the TAM (Technology Acceptance Model) model. This theory explains the link between behaviours and attitudes within the actions of humans. The purpose of this theory is to foresee how people behave according to their intentions and the attitudes they already have. When a person decided to perform a certain action, this is usually based on the outcome he or she is expecting from doing this action. This theory was developed by Fishbein and Ajzen in 1967, and it was based on previous research in the field of social psychology, persuasion, and theories about attitudes. The Theory of Reasoned Actions was revisited and extended by other theorists later. The theory is also used in the discourse of

communication, according to Gillmore, et al. (2002). According to Doswell, et al. (2011), the main focus of TRA is to understand the behaviour of people through checking the motivation behind it. Montañó and Kasprzyk (2015) further add that this theory means that an individual's intention to do a certain behaviour is the main reason behind doing this action or not.

Besides, there is a role for social norms around the act as it leads to the person doing the action or not according to Ajzen and Madden (1986).

The TAM (Technology Acceptance Model) is based on the theory of Reasoned Action, and it is used as a theoretical framework for the current study to explore the level of acceptance of technology among teachers and students in a high school setting. The model includes two aspects; the perceived usefulness and the perceived ease of use described by (Davis, Bagozzi & Warshaw 1989) in figure one.

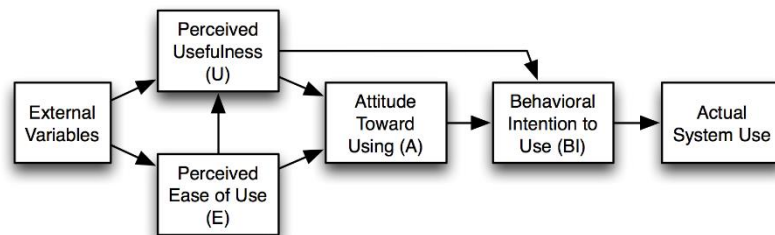


Figure 1 The Technology Acceptance Model, version 1

The TAM shows how people accept and use a certain technology. The use of the system or the actual system is the target that we want to achieve in working with technology; therefore, we have to create the behavioral intention, and that is the element that makes people want to use that technology. The behavioral intention is affected by the attitude, which is the attitude or the impression of the technology in general terms. The TAM model states that when people are given a new technology to use, there are different factors that can impact their decision about when to use this technology and how to use it. First, there is the Perceived usefulness which was defined by Davis (1989, p.320) as "the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would enhance his or her job performance". This means if people believe that this technology will help them achieve their target of what they want to

do or not. Second, there is the Perceived ease of use, Davis (1989, p.322) defined this as "the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would be free from effort". If it is easy to use the proposed technology, then the difficulties are controlled, but if it is not, then the user interface is not easy to use, and people will not have positive opinions about it. There are other external variables such as the social impact which is considered a vital element in determining the people's attitude. If these elements are there, then the individuals should have the intention and the desire to use the technology. However, their attitude might change based on other factors such as gender and age, because people are different. The TAM model was revisited and updated continuously; two major updates were done to create different variations of the model like TAM 2 which is developed by (Venkatesh and Davis, 2000; Venkatesh, 2000) and the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology by Venkatesh et al. (2003).

In this study, the focus is on the students and the teachers' attitudes towards the use of technology in cooperative learning activities. The researcher is interested to know the perceived usefulness and the perceived ease of use of technology in teaching using cooperative activities. Therefore, based on this framework, a Likert-scale survey was designed to explore these two aspects based on this proposed theoretical framework.

2.2 Cooperative Learning.

Many studies were conducted on cooperative learning, especially in language learning classes. One of the studies was conducted by Nair and Sanai (2018) to see the effects of using the STAD method which is one of the cooperative learning approaches on the students' writing skills in the area of descriptive writing. The study utilised a pre-test, a post-test, interviews, reflections and observational checklists to collect the data. The findings indicated a positive effect of the STAD model in enhancing the students' descriptive writing skills. In another study by Jou (2017), which discussed the use of cooperative learning and project-based learning in English classes, the author conducted interviews and observation of fourth-year students' graduation project in Taiwan and the findings indicated positives outcomes for using these two approaches on the students' level of interaction and academic performance. Another study was conducted on cooperative learning by Gonzales and Torres (2016) on Filipino ESL learners. The authors wanted to investigate the effectiveness of the cooperative model on 8th graders in a private

school. Therefore, through their quasi-experimental study, they managed to design a survey to explore the students' attitudes towards the integration of cooperative learning in the classroom. The effectiveness of the model was also investigated by finding out the correlation between the use of this learning model and the reading test scores. So the study used mixed methods to reach its aim. The study concluded that there is a weak significance between reading test scores and the cooperative learning model while the students had positive attitudes towards the model used. The authors believe that the implication of their study can be extended to ESL classes around the world and that it is not limited to the study's setting. Farrell and Jacobs (2016). Conducted a study on teachers and discussed the use of reflection groups by teachers to help instructors/teachers in facilitating cooperative learning in their classes. The reflective groups were organised based on eight cooperative learning principles, and the aim was to see how cooperative learning is in line with their beliefs about the educational process. The findings indicated that the teachers would prefer that their students have organised interaction with their peers. Besides, a study was conducted in India by Subramanyam and Chandrashekar (2020) on ninth-graders. The sample included 80 students who were put in control groups and experiment groups to test the effectiveness of the cooperative model. The results of the study revealed that using the cooperative model enhanced the students' reading comprehension abilities for second language learners. All the mentioned studies reflect the importance of cooperative learning model as a tool to improve students' performance, independence and interpersonal relationships in various classroom settings.

2.3 Teaching with Technology

Currently, using technology is inevitable in classrooms either in schools or universities or any educational setting such as training centres, colleges or universities. Technology was proven to play an essential role in the process of teaching and learning. Technology can motivate the students and even the teachers. Therefore, the role played by technology cannot be overlooked at our current time. In language learning, technology is particularly useful and important as it facilitates the students' learning and facilitates the teachers' jobs.

Technology standards are a major issue to be considered whenever technology is utilised in education. Hence, technology should be used cautiously with an open eye to the essential differences with the western culture compared to the reserved Arabic culture. It is worth

mentioning that there are certain standards to use technology in class safely and properly. These standards require professionally qualified teachers who are not only familiar with the latest modern technology but are also familiar with the Islamic and Arabic culture. Typically those teachers are supposed to provide guidance to their students and train them to use online technology legally and critically. Furthermore; the teachers have to educate their learners of important concepts such as plagiarism, copyrights infringement, safe online search, legal consequences cyberbullying, and fake accounts. They should warn their students not to communicate or share personal information with strangers (Healey, 2018).

A study was conducted in China to decide if the teachers managed to use technology effectively in class to teach English or not, and to decide the level of acceptance of both teachers and students of the idea of teaching and learning through technology. The researchers found that the suggested technological program was successful and beneficial for most of the learners and teachers (Teo, Huang, & Hoi, 2018).

In another study about the same topic, the researchers aimed at deciding the impact of a flipped classroom model in English classes. The main focus of the study was on the students' level of engagement. This research was done within four weeks of a language course in the spring term of the school year in a high school. The researchers found out that there was a major difference between test scores' before and after the intervention for the targeted group who experienced the flipped classroom model. In addition, there was no noticeable difference between the tests' scores of the groups of students who did not experience flipped classes. Thus, teachers recommended using the flipped classroom model to increase the students' engagement (Ayçiçek & Yanpar Yelken, 2018).

Looking at the effect of using gamification to teach English in class, there was a study that aimed to find the effect of using digital games on the students' learning performance. The targeted group of learners had higher marks in their final exams compared to the other group who were taught the same skill traditionally. Therefore, the researcher concluded that using digital games and Kahoot to teach the language learners significantly affected the students' level of performance (Wichadee and Pattanapichet, 2018).

Another study aimed at determining the teachers' tendency to use computer pronunciation software as a method to improve the students' pronunciation and fluency level in which the researcher used the Power 2 program for this purpose. The teachers suggested that using the Power 2 program to teach English in their classes had a statistically significant impact on the students' fluency, and helped to boost their self-confidence during their speaking assessments. As a result, the researchers of the study found that using the computer pronunciation software to teach speaking in English classes had a positive effect on the learner's fluency and proficiency (Gilakjani, et al., 2019).

Another study by Machmud (2018) aimed at evaluating the integration of Smartphone in teaching English from the High school students' perspectives in Indonesian Schools. The researchers have previously investigated the teachers' and the administrators' opinions towards using smartphones as a method of integrating technology to teach English in class, and they mostly had a positive attitude toward it. So they decided to enrich their study by collecting the learners' opinions. The result of the study was objective as the students mostly supported using the phones for learning in class, but at the same time, they admitted that many of them were going off the task and used their phones in other practices like online chatting or even checking their social media pages. Thus the researcher recommended the use of smartphones in classes. However, they advised the school's administration to design an appropriate policy of using this type of technology in class to ensure that this easily applied source of technology enhances the students' learning and keeps it beneficial (Machmud, 2018).

The next study in this review investigated the effects of using computer reading programs to improve the literacy of struggling students in English classes. The study was conducted in a medium public school of Ahmed Abad in India. The researchers used Grapho Learn, which is a reading tool (computer-assisted) in the English classes of grade three students who were below average in their reading. The study found that the intervention of computer-based reading program helped the struggling readers to maximise their reading ability and comprehension. The researchers recommended the integration of computer programs in teaching reading for non-native learners (Patel, et al., 2018).

Another study investigated conducted by Franco-Camargo and Camacho-Vásquez (2018) about the role of wiki sites and video integration in improving the writing skill of EFL students. The

study was done in Weisheit institute, and the participants were the English language B1 students. The researchers noticed a significant difference in the students' marks when they analysed the results of pre and post writing tests. The post writing tests results indicated that the students writing skills including their proper use of vocabulary, correct use of grammar, and the organisation of their ideas have improved in the classes which integrated Wiki sites and videos to teach writing.

Moreover, in one of the most relevant studies done in UAE, the researchers investigated the effect of social media integration in teaching English for university students. They also investigated the students' perception of using different social media programs. The study was conducted within 48 universities. The researchers used a variety of social media programs such as Twitter, Google+, Instagram, and Facebook. In the end, the researchers found that using social media affected the learners positively as it made their learning fun and applicable to the real world. Also, most of the students who participated in the study preferred using facebook program in their learning process (Salloum, et al., 2018)

Furthermore, a study was conducted by Andrew, et al. (2018) in two universities in the UAE. The study evaluated the significance of using technology on the learners' level and academic performance. The study also explored the students' personal preference for the best enjoyable technology tool used in their classes. The researchers discovered that most of the participants preferred the digital learning implementation in the classrooms instead of depending totally on books and printed resources. To sum up, most studies done on the effect of using technology on students' academic performance resulted in positive results and encouraged the use of technology to improve learning, especially in language classes.

2.4 Cooperative Learning & Technology

Cooperative learning is not a new concept; it is actually used since 1970, according to Cobb (2016). The term "has its roots in theories of constructivism and social interdependence theory. When computer and internet technologies are used when using cooperative learning for disadvantaged students, educators must also consider learning tools and motivation. Students who receive computer-assisted instruction (CAI) have higher student achievements than students who do not use technology in the classroom." (Cobb, 2016, p.4). The findings of

Cobb's (2016) study suggests that using cooperative learning helps students to create positive relationships with their peers which is more important than having a higher IQ for some. The findings also indicate that students who used cooperative technological learning have higher achievements, have better self-esteem and can work with their peers to achieve their targets.

The study of Bodsworth and Goodyear (2017) discuss both the difficulties and the facilitators to using technology in the cooperative learning activities in the physical education subject. The authors of the study wanted to explore the challenges that might face technology integration when using the model of cooperative learning for school children. Therefore, they collected about the use of tablets to support the children's learning. The authors concluded that some barriers were identified and the most important one was the unfamiliarity with technology and lack of cooperation among groups. A positive conclusion was that students were able to collaborate and reflect better on their learning using this model. The findings were not in line with the existing literature about the new generation and their powerful abilities to use technology. Therefore, this study draws attention to the importance of instructional design and the use of proper pedagogical ways to integrate technology into education.

Another study by Korotiaieva and Strelchenko (2018) focused on the problems encountered when using cooperative learning technology in ESL classrooms. The study concluded that "through cooperative learning techniques, students can become real partners in the learning enterprise. Since most consequential problems are solved via collaboration, students who learn to work together in an educational setting are better prepared to meet life's obligations (p.151)." Therefore, through such type of activities, students can solve problems and prepare to engage in real life, so cooperative learning technology does not only affect the students' learning, but it also affects their life skills.

In another attempt to explore the effect of cooperative learning technology in EAP classes, Han (2018) flipped his EAP class and used high quality online learning and cooperative activities. The findings of the study indicated that there were positive learning outcomes for students and this resulted in more development in the student's language in terms of content and mastery of the language; the students also became more autonomous learners.

On the tertiary level, a study was conducted by Rahman, Yunus and Hashim (2019) about using cooperative learning technology in ESL classes. The study concluded that there is no significant relationship “between computer self-efficacy and computer anxiety and ESL lecturers' attitude in integrating flipped learning. According to the findings, Malaysian ESL lecturers had no issues in overcoming the difficulties they faced while using technology in cooperative learning activities, and they were able to solve them.

Moreover, the study of Alawami (2019) stated that not only cooperative learning activities using technology helped the students' learning, but they also served in improving their sense of voice and success especially for struggling learners. Besides, in another study by Curry, et al. (2017,p.1499), the authors praised the success of cooperative learning technology: “An initial review of available literature, indicates a positive relationship among classroom technologies such as interactive whiteboards, digital books, collaborative learning platforms (e.g. Google Drive, Google Classroom), and educational applications (e.g. Show Me, Explain Everything) and language development of ELL students (e.g. See Saw, Photo Story, Story Creator)”. In their study, the authors focused on the best practices in applying cooperative learning activities in the classroom and how to get the most of this type of activities to help improve the teaching and learning experience for students.

Therefore, through the previous literature, it can be concluded that although cooperative meaning activities when using technology can lead to some problems and difficulties, most studies found several benefits for them. Moreover, the issues or the difficulties found could be handled by students and teachers.

The current study aims at exploring the teachers' and the students' attitudes towards using technology in cooperative learning activities. Therefore, the researcher aims at having conclusive findings on the attitudes of the most important stakeholder parties in the process of education; teachers and students to be able to suggest changes in the school's curriculum design and to suggest future research in the same area due to the importance of teaching with technology.

3. Chapter Three: Methodology

This chapter is about the methodology used in conducting the current study. There is also a description of the rationale behind choosing this methodology and a description of the instrument design. The chapter gives information about the setting of the study, the participants, the time frame, research ethics and procedures for conducting the study.

3.1 The research approach

The current study aims at exploring the teachers' and the students' attitudes towards the effectiveness of using technology in cooperative learning activities. The focus was on the English subject and superficially writing skills. To explore the participants' attitudes, the researcher designed two surveys based on the TAM model. The study utilised quantitative methods to collect the data. Quantitative methods are considered reliable, and they are also considered the most ethically responsible way to collect data, according to Houser (2019). It is true that qualitative data can lead to a better understanding of the topic, but in certain types of research, this is not essential. Quantitative methods also allow the researcher to conduct large scale study and hence get a more comprehensive view about the topic under investigation. According to Check and Schutt (2011, p.160) "Researchers have used survey methods to investigate areas of education as diverse as school desegregation, academic achievement, teaching practice, and leadership." Therefore, surveys are considered the best tools to explore attitudes and opinions. Muijs (2010) stated that there are different ways to create surveys, and every way has its advantages and disadvantages. Previously the most common way of doing a survey was using a pencil and paper. This method had its advantages as participants were more familiar with the topic; they could take their time to think and answer. However, the survey administration and collection of data was time-consuming, and the response rate was low. Therefore, for the purpose of this study, the researcher used online surveys to save time and effort and to facilitate distribution and collection of data. The surveys were based on Likert-scale items, and they were thematically divided into two main sections to cover the perceived

usefulness and the perceived easiness of use for technology. According to Schmee and Oppenlander (p.14) “Likert scales measure the strength of a respondent's perceived agreement or disagreement.” Therefore, they were ideal in measuring the participants’ agreement or disagreement with the usefulness of the intervention.

3.2 The Research Design

The research design for this study is quantitative. The study involved a two weeks intervention where the researcher gave a list of activities that use technology in cooperative learning and that were suitable to the students’ level. The intervention lasted for two weeks; then the surveys were given to the teachers and the students. The researcher designed a survey for both the teachers and the students to explore their attitudes about using technology in cooperative learning. The rationale behind the research design was that surveys are the best instruments to explore attitudes and perceptions. The researcher designed the two surveys using Likert scale questions (Joshi, et al., 2015).

3.3 The setting

The setting of the study is a private high school in the UAE. The school is following the American curriculum from k-12. The school selected utilises technology in its classes as part of its educational policy. The school had all the k-12 grades, but the focus of the current study was on high school students, and the focus was on the English subject, especially writing skills.

3.4 The participants

3.4.1 Students’ Sample Selection

The sample population of the study was a purposeful sample and students were selected based on their status as high school students. The participants were enrolled in grade 11. The rationale behind choosing grade 11 is that they would not be busy with their study and scores like grade 10 and 12, and they would also be grown enough to use advanced technology. The total number of participating students was 269.

3.4.2 Teachers’ Sample Selection

The teachers selected for the study are English teachers from several nationalities and both genders. They received formal education in English language teaching. The teachers were

experienced in teaching English, and they also received training on the use of technology in the classroom. The participation of the teachers was on a volunteer basis; therefore, eleven teachers volunteered to participate in the study.

3.5 The procedures

The first step for the researcher was to obtain the needed approvals from the school's management through their required procedures. This was important to make the research collect data from the school's teachers and students. The aim of the study was explained to the school's management, and they approved it. The next step was to hold a meeting with the English teachers to explain the purpose of the study and to invite them to take part in the study. The teachers were informed that they need to focus on the use of technology in cooperative learning activities with a specific reference to writing skills. The last step was to send emails to students and their parents/guardians to inform them about the aim of the study and to gain their informed consent. The last step was to start the intervention for two weeks, then distribute the surveys.

3.6 The intervention

The researcher planned an intervention that lasted for two weeks. The intervention was about providing cooperative learning activities based on technology. Small tasks that students do together then receive awards or recognition. The researcher relied on technology to design the activities, and the students were also required to use technology to do the tasks. Each group worked as a team and did the required tasks either using laptops, tablets or their smartphones. The students used Google documents, and they were given Kahoot team activities, Nearpod activities and the LMS discussion forums. The rewarding system was done through obtaining scores or badges through the learning management system used in the school (see sample task in Appendix E). The intervention lasted for two week, and the students continued to work on their writing skills using these activities for two weeks. The first week was the planning phase, where students were told the plan, and they were assigned a team leader and divided into groups. During this week, students attended classes on academic writing and the second phase was explained thoroughly. The second phase was the writing phase. Students communicated through the school's LMS and worked on their tasks. They had to seek the teacher's approval after each step. Finally they published their first draft and got their teacher's feedback and based on that, they published the final draft.

3.7 The instruments

The instruments used in this study were two Likert-scale surveys (See appendix C, D). The aim of the surveys was to explore the students' and the teachers' attitudes towards using technology in cooperative learning activities to check the level of acceptance and easiness of use of the technology used in the intervention by the students and the teachers. Each survey included 14 questions, and each was divided into two parts. The first part was about the students' and the teachers' perceived usefulness, and the second part was about their perception of the easiness of use. The surveys were designed based on the TAM model.

3.8 Data Collection

The data collection started by asking the volunteers to sign the consent forms, then the intervention took place for two weeks. The next step was to distribute the surveys by email to teachers and students. The researcher had to follow up with the teachers and the students to make sure they all filled in the surveys. The data collection process lasted for two weeks. The platform used to collect the data through the survey was Google forms free tool. The rationale behind the choice of this tool is that first, it is free, and second, it is flexible as the question numbers are not limited like other platforms. Google forms also provide statistics about each survey item. Using the online platform made collecting the data much easier and save time. It was flexible and convenient as both the teachers and the students were able to fill the surveys in without being constrained by time or place.

3.9 Time plan

The researcher finished the study in two months as planned. The first month was be for choosing the school, choosing the classes and talking to the principal and the teachers to obtain their consent to do the research study at the chosen school. The second month was for doing the planned intervention for two weeks, and the next two weeks were dedicated to collecting the data from teachers and students. The timetable of the intervention was carefully planned, so it does not affect the school curriculum to be covered. According to Sagor (2011, p.90) "If finding the time for data collection means taking time away from other learning activities, the cost is greater than most dedicated teachers are willing to pay." However, the teachers did an excellent

job in doing cooperative activities through technology, and they filled in the surveys promptly. These factors facilitated following the original time plan.

3.10 Ethicality of research

In order to make sure that the study is ethical, the researcher studied the principles of ethical research in education discussed by Hammersley and Traianou (2012) and followed the best practices. The researcher informed all participants about the main aim of the study and made sure they understand their rights and that they gave their consent to participate by signing a consent form which contained all the needed details about the purpose of the study and its procedures (See appendix A, B). Also, the same consent form was given to the parents/guardians of students with information on the aim of the research and that it would involve intervention and a survey. The parents/guardians were asked to approve their children's participation in the study. All participants were informed that they could withdraw at any time from the study without the need for any justification. They were also told that this withdrawal would not have any effect on their jobs as teachers or their marks as students. The researcher also followed the principle of confidentiality. The participants were assured that the data resulting from their participation in the study will remain confidential and that it will not be shared with anyone except the supervisor of the study. The participants were also assured anonymity. They were told that their names are not required in the survey and that all their personal information will not be disclosed to any party. Finally, the participants were informed about the risks and the benefits of participating in this study. For the benefits, they were told that they would help the researcher do her research study and obtain her master's degree. They were also told that there are no risks at all for taking part in this study and that their participation will not affect their jobs as teachers or their grades as students.

Chapter Four: Results

This chapter is about presenting the study's results. Two surveys were designed to collect data, one for teachers and one for students. The surveys utilised the Likert scale. The result of each survey is presented in this chapter, and the results for each survey is further divided into two parts; one for the perceived usefulness and one for the perceived easiness of use.

4.1 Teachers' Surveys

The teachers' survey is divided into parts. In the following section, each part will be presented and the numbers will be displayed in addition to the percentages. The sample of the teachers included 11 high school English teachers (n=11). Table 1 shows the results of part one in the teachers' survey which refers to perceived usefulness:

4.1.1 Part One: Perceived Usefulness

No	Survey Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	Being familiar with the school LMS and the used technological tools helped my students to improve their writing level.	9%	9%	0%	36%	45%
2	Using technology in Cooperative Learning is effective for my students to learn English in general.	9%	9%	0%	27%	55%
3	Using technology in Cooperative Learning is effective for my students to improve their writing skills in specific.	9%	18%	9%	27%	36%
4	Utilising technology in Cooperative Learning enhances the efficacy of my students' learning.	9%	9%	0%	27%	55%
5	Using technology in Cooperative Learning made my students work harder.	9%	18%	0%	36%	36%
6	The technological tools I used in my Cooperative Learning activities were useful and added to my student's writing knowledge.	9%	18%	9%	18%	45%
7	Using technology in Cooperative Learning made my students' interact better with their peers	18%	27%	9%	18%	27%

Table1 Part One: Perceived Usefulness

For the first survey item which is “Being familiar with the school LMS and the used technological tools helped my students to improve their writing level” nine teachers agreed or strongly agreed that their students were helped by using technological tools. For the second survey item which is “Using technology in Cooperative Learning is effective for my students to learn English in general” Nine teachers agreed or strongly agreed that they found technology effective for their students to learn English in general. For the third survey item which is “Using technology in Cooperative Learning is effective for my students to improve their writing skills in specific” seven teachers agreed or strongly agreed that their students were able to improve their writing skills by using technological tools. For the fourth survey item which is “Utilising technology in Cooperative Learning enhances the efficacy of my students’ learning” Nine teachers agreed or strongly agreed that their students’ efficacy increased through using technological tools. For the fifth survey item which is “Using technology in Cooperative Learning made my students work harder” eight teachers agreed or strongly agreed that their students were helped by using technological tools. For the sixth survey item which is “The technological tools I used in my Cooperative Learning activities were useful and added to my student’s writing knowledge” seven teachers agreed or strongly agreed that the technological tools used in the cooperative learning activities and added to their student’s writing knowledge. For the seventh survey item which is “Using technology in Cooperative Learning made my students’ interact better with their peers” six teachers agreed or strongly agreed that their students interacted better with their peers due to using technology in the cooperative learning activities. The high numbers of teachers who agree or strongly agree reflect positivity towards the perceived usefulness of the use of technological tools from the pedagogical point of view.

The following bar graph shows the percentages of each survey item. The Likert scale items were shortened according to the following key. Strongly Disagree=SD, Disagree=D, Neither Agree nor Disagree=N, Agree=A, Strongly Agree=SA. The graph shows the percentage of each Likert scale item for each question.

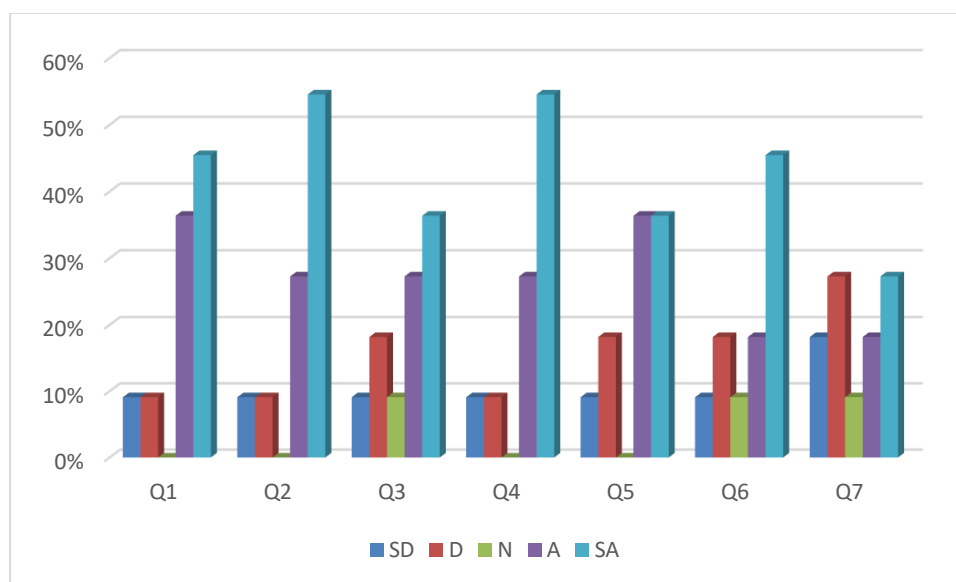


Figure 2 Part One: Perceived Usefulness

The bar chart shows that most teachers' answers were in the two categories of "Agree" and "Strongly Agree" and this reflects a general trend of positivity towards the use of cooperative learning activities and integrating technology in them from the pedagogical point of view.

4.1.2 Part Two: Perceived Easiness of Use

The teachers' survey is divided into parts. Table 2 shows the results of part two in the teachers' survey which refers to perceived Easiness of Use:

No	Survey Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	It is easy for me to use the school LMS in my students' cooperative activities when learning English.	18%	9%	0%	36%	36%
2	It is easy for me to learn to use Collaborative platforms concerning Cooperative Learning.	9%	9%	0%	18%	64%
3	The use of Cooperative Learning facilitates my students' English education	9%	9%	9%	18%	55%

4	The technological tools I used in designing my students' Cooperative Learning activities were easy to use.	9%	9%	0%	9%	73%
5	I have no issues in using the internet and the different websites in to design activities for my students' English learning.	9%	18%	18%	18%	36%
6	I can troubleshoot simple internet problems to be able to contact my students, design and work with them on the activities.	18%	9%	9%	18%	45%
7	It is easy to communicate with my students through technology.	18%	9%	9%	27%	36%

Table 2 Part Two: Perceived Easiness of Use

For the first survey item which is “It is easy for me to use the school LMS in my students’ cooperative activities when learning English” eight teachers agreed or strongly agreed using the school’s LMS was easy for them. For the second survey item which is “It is easy for me to learn to use Collaborative platforms concerning Cooperative Learning” Nine teachers agreed or strongly agreed that they found it easy for them to use collaborative platform to design cooperative learning activities. For the third survey item which is “The use of Cooperative Learning facilitates my students’ English education” eight teachers agreed or strongly agreed that their students’ learning was facilitated by the use of cooperative learning activities. For the fourth survey item which is “The technological tools I used in designing my students’ Cooperative Learning activities were easy to use” Nine teachers agreed or strongly agreed that the technological tools they used in their cooperative learning activities design were easy to use. For the fifth survey item which is “I have no issues in using the internet and the different websites to design activities for my students’ English learning” six teachers agreed or strongly agreed that they have no problem in dealing with the internet or the different websites to design their cooperative learning activities. For the sixth survey item which is “I can troubleshoot simple internet problems to be able to contact my students, design and work with them on the activities” seven teachers agreed or strongly agreed that they can troubleshoot simple internet problems in contacting their students or designing and working on the activities with them. For the seventh survey item which is “It is easy to communicate with my students through technology” seven teachers agreed or strongly agreed that it was easy for them to communicate with their students through technology. The high numbers of teachers

who agree or strongly agree reflect positivity towards the perceived easiness of the use of technological tools from the logistical point of view.

The following bar graph shows the percentages of each survey item. The Likert scale items were shortened according to the following key. Strongly Disagree=SD, Disagree=D, Neither Agree nor Disagree=N, Agree=A, Strongly Agree=SA. The graph shows the percentage of each Likert scale item for each question.

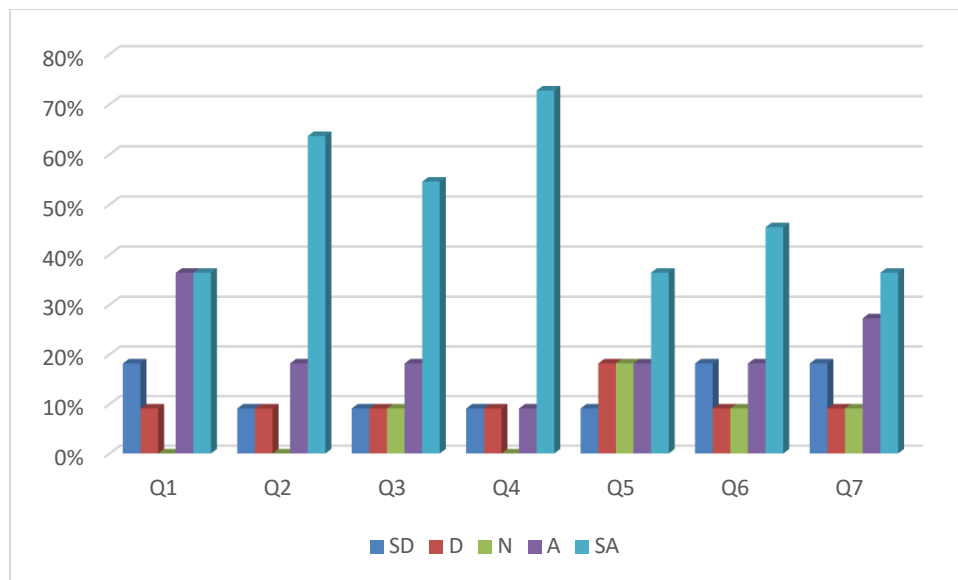


Figure 3 Part Two: Perceived Easiness of Use

The bar chart shows that most teachers' answers were in the two categories of "Agree" and "Strongly Agree" and this reflects a general trend of positivity towards the use of cooperative learning activities and integrating technology in them from the logistical point of view which is the extend of easiness when using them.

4.2 Students' Surveys

The students' survey is divided into parts. In the following section, each part will be presented and the numbers will be displayed in addition to the percentages. The sample of the students included 169 high school students (n=269). Table 3 shows the results of part one in the students' survey which refers to perceived usefulness:

4.2.1 Part One: Perceived Usefulness

No	Survey Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	Being familiar with the school LMS and the used technological tools helped me improve my writing level.	6%	6%	8%	7%	74%
2	Using technology in Cooperative Learning is effective in learning English in general.	4%	5%	12%	21%	58%
3	Using technology in Cooperative Learning is effective in improving my writing skills in specific.	4%	4%	15%	25%	52%
4	Utilising technology in Cooperative Learning enhances the efficacy of my learning.	6%	6%	6%	24%	59%
5	Using technology in Cooperative Learning made me work harder.	8%	6%	12%	32%	42%
6	The technological tools I used in my Cooperative Learning activities were useful and added to my writing knowledge.	6%	12%	12%	21%	49%
7	Using technology in Cooperative Learning made me interact better with my peers.	9%	25%	7%	29%	30%

Table 3 Part One: Perceived Usefulness

For the first survey item which is “Being familiar with the school LMS and the used technological tools helped me improve my writing level” 218 students agreed or strongly agreed that being familiar with the school’s LMS and the different technological tools helped them to improve their writing level. For the second survey item, which is “Using technology in Cooperative Learning is effective in learning English in general” 213 students agreed or strongly agreed that they found technology effective for learning English in general. For the third survey item which is “Using technology in Cooperative Learning is effective in improving my writing skills in specific” 207 students agreed or strongly agreed that they were able to improve their writing skills by using technological tools in cooperative learning

activities. For the fourth survey item, which is “Utilising technology in Cooperative Learning enhances the efficacy of my learning” 223 students agreed or strongly agreed that their efficacy increased through using technological tools. For the fifth survey item, which is “Using technology in Cooperative Learning made me work harder” 198 students agreed or strongly agreed that using technology in cooperative learning made them work harder. For the sixth survey item which is “The technological tools I used in my Cooperative Learning activities were useful and added to my writing knowledge” 189 students agreed or strongly agreed that the technological tools used in the cooperative learning activities and added to their writing knowledge. For the seventh survey item which is “Using technology in Cooperative Learning made me interact better with my peers” 159 teachers agreed or strongly agreed that they interacted better with their peers due to using technology in the cooperative learning activities. The high numbers of students who agree or strongly agree reflect positivity towards the perceived usefulness of the use of technological tools from the pedagogical point of view.

The following bar graph shows the percentages for each survey item. The Likert scale items were shortened according to the following key. Strongly Disagree=SD, Disagree=D, Neither Agree nor Disagree=N, Agree=A, Strongly Agree=SA. The graph shows the percentage of each Likert scale item for each question.

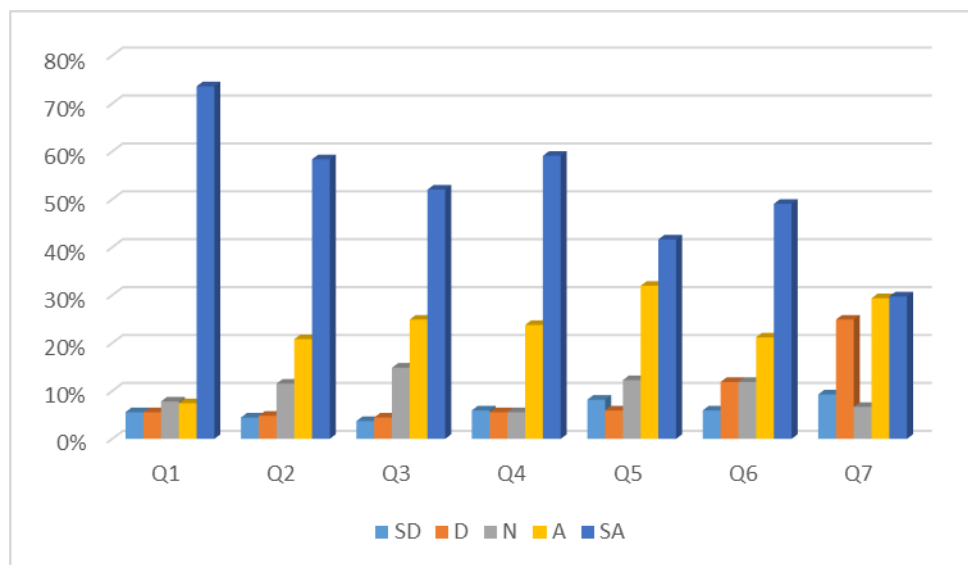


Figure 4 Part One: Perceived Usefulness

The bar chart shows that most students' answers were in the two categories of "Agree" and "Strongly Agree" and this reflects a general trend of positivity towards the use of cooperative learning activities and integrating technology in them from the pedagogical point of view. This means that most students found using technology in cooperative learning tools useful for the teaching and learning process.

4.2.2 Part Two: Perceived Easiness of Use

The students' survey is divided into parts. In the following section, part two is presented, and the numbers will be displayed in addition to the percentages. Table 4 shows the results of part one in the students' survey, which refers to the perceived easiness of use:

No	Survey Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	It is easy for me to use the school LMS in my cooperative activities when learning English.	8%	15%	19%	22%	37%
2	It is easy for me to learn to use Collaborative platforms concerning Cooperative Learning.	12%	20%	14%	25%	29%
3	The use of Cooperative Learning facilitates my English education	13%	17%	14%	24%	31%
4	The technological tools I used in my Cooperative Learning activities were easy to use.	11%	18%	13%	24%	34%
5	I have no issues in using the internet and the different websites in my English learning.	14%	16%	14%	24%	30%
6	I can troubleshoot simple internet problems to be able to contact my peers and work with them on the activities.	10%	14%	13%	20%	42%
7	It is easy to communicate with my peers through technology.	9%	14%	13%	26%	37%

Table 4 Part Two: Perceived Easiness of Use

For the first survey item which is “It is easy for me to use the school LMS in my cooperative activities when learning English” 157 students agreed or strongly agreed using the school’s LMS was easy for them when they were learning English. For the second survey item which is “It is easy for me to learn to use Collaborative platforms concerning Cooperative Learning” 145 students agreed or strongly agreed that they found it easy for them to use the collaborative platform in cooperative learning activities. For the third survey item, which is “The use of Cooperative Learning facilitates my English education” 148 students agreed or strongly agreed that their learning was facilitated by the use of cooperative learning activities. For the fourth survey item which is “The technological tools I used in my Cooperative Learning activities were easy to use” 156 students agreed or strongly agreed that the technological tools they used in their cooperative learning activities design were easy to use. For the fifth survey item which is “I have no issues in using the internet and the different websites in my English learning” 147 students agreed or strongly agreed that they have no problem in dealing with the internet or the different websites to do their cooperative learning activities. For the sixth survey item which is “I can troubleshoot simple internet problems to be able to contact my peers and work with them on the activities” 168 students agreed or strongly agreed that they could troubleshoot simple internet problems in contacting their peers and working on the activities with them. For the seventh survey item, which is “It is easy to communicate with my peers through technology” 171 students agreed or strongly agreed that it was easy for them to communicate with their peers through technology. The high numbers of students who agree or strongly agree reflect positivity towards the perceived easiness of the use of technological tools from the logistical point of view. However, the numbers of part two seem to be lower than part one, which reflects that although students perceived the technology as useful, some of them found difficulty when they used it.

The following bar graph shows the percentages for each survey item. The Likert scale items were shortened according to the following key. Strongly Disagree=SD, Disagree=D, Neither Agree nor Disagree=N, Agree=A, Strongly Agree=SA. The graph shows the percentage of each Likert scale item for each question.

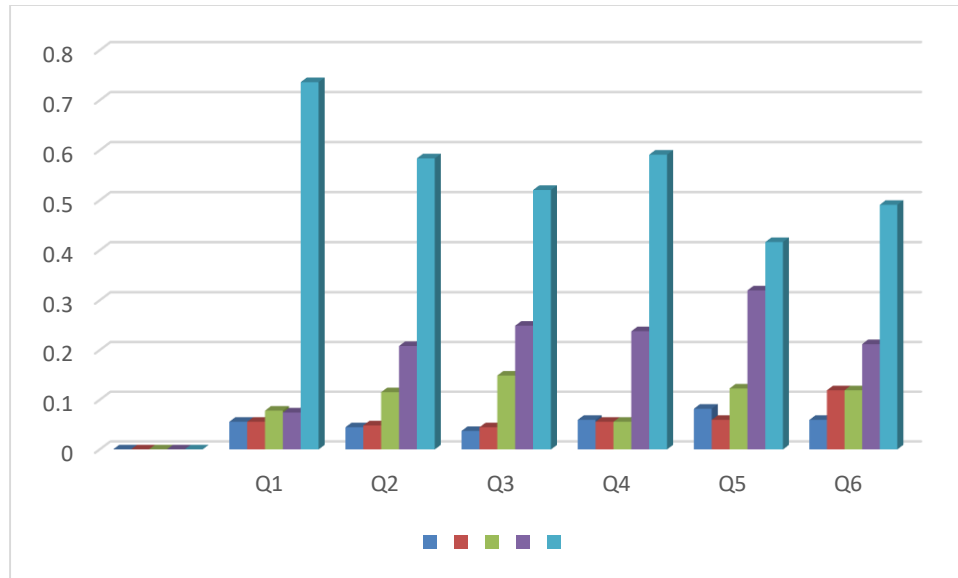


Figure 5 Part Two: Perceived Easiness of Use

The bar chart shows that most teachers' answers were in the two categories of "Agree" and "Strongly Agree" and this reflects a general trend of positivity towards the use of cooperative learning activities and integrating technology in them from the pedagogical point of view.

To sum up, the results section in chapter four reflects a positive trend from both teachers and students towards the usefulness and the easiness of use of technological tools in using or designing cooperative learning activities. In the next chapter, there will be an interpretation for the results and based on the findings, pedagogical implications will be described, and the study will be situated within the existing literature.

Chapter Five: Discussion

This chapter interprets the numerical results of the two surveys used in the study and makes links to the existing literature to see if the findings of the current study are similar or different from previous similar studies. The aim is to situate the current study in the existing literature and to find out the pedagogical implications of the findings.

5.1 Interpretation of Findings

The main objective of the current study is to explore teachers' and students' attitudes towards the use of technology in cooperative learning activities. For this purpose, the researcher designed two surveys based on the TAM model. The data collected from both the students and the teachers through the surveys were analysed, and the implications were revealed. In this section, findings for each survey will be interpreted to get meaningful information from the data collected.

5.1.1 Teachers' Surveys-Part One

The teachers' surveys were divided into two parts. The first part was about the perceived usefulness of technology in cooperative activities. The data of the first part revealed positive trends towards the usefulness of technology in terms of pedagogy. The teachers stated that their previous knowledge of the school's LMS and using technology previously in classes helped them to improve their students' writing level from the pedagogical point of view. This reflects the importance of the previous initiatives in the UAE educational system that kept up to date with the latest trends around the globe and utilised technology in the classroom on several levels. Most of the teachers also stated that using technology was helpful for students to learn English in general, and this reflects the role of technology in the process of teaching and learning. A high number of teachers mentioned that using technology in cooperative learning activities helped their students to improve their writing skills and enhanced their efficacy of learning. Finally, a high number of teachers also mentioned that students worked harder when technology was used and interacted better with their peers. This also might be due to students gaining interest in learning because of the numerous options provided with technology, and also shy students might be encouraged to work more and interact from behind their screens. Most teachers were satisfied with the technological tools and platforms used in the intervention, and

this reflects the quality of some technological tools and platforms that can be even free for the use of schools and educators. The interpretation of data for the teachers' survey indicates a positive trend towards the usefulness of integrating technology into cooperative learning activities.

5.1.2 Teachers' Surveys-Part Two

Part two of the teachers' surveys was about the perceived easiness of technology use. The data of the second part indicated that teachers found the use of technology easy to some extent, based on their current knowledge of using technology in education. However, the results also indicated that some of them might find difficulties during the process. Most teachers indicated that it was easy for them to use the school's LMS in their teaching. This may be due to the fact that they used to use it before. Also, a good number of teachers mentioned that it was easy for them to learn the new technological tools and platforms used in the intervention. This might be due to the user-friendly interface of most education applications and tools, and the fact that teachers are already integrating technology into the traditional classroom. They usually do this because of their personal interest or because of their workplace policies. However, two teachers strongly disagreed and stated that it was not easy for them to do so, and this sheds light on the difficulties faced by some ESL teachers when they are asked to utilise technology in their classroom, the process does not seem very smooth for every teacher. In addition, most teachers indicated that technology contributed to the teaching and learning process and facilitated their students' learning, and this reveals the role of technology in making the teaching and learning process easier than it was in the traditional classroom. When asked about the easiness of the use of the new technological tools and platforms during the intervention, most teachers agreed that they were easy to use, but two teachers again mentioned it was not that easy for them to use. This reflects that teachers might need more training on new technological tools to be able to use them effectively. When asked about their use of the internet and the different websites to design activities, most teachers agreed it was not difficult, but some also mentioned that they disagreed. Besides, when most teachers mentioned that they could troubleshoot simple technological problems, two teachers disagreed and revealed their inability to do so. Finally, most teachers believed that it was easy to communicate with their students through technology. In general, most teachers revealed that using technology was easy for them.

5.1.3 Students' Surveys-Part One

The students' surveys were divided into two parts, like the teachers' survey. The first part was about the perceived usefulness of technology in cooperative activities. The data of the first part revealed positive trends from the students' point of view towards the usefulness of technology in terms of teaching and learning. The students stated that being familiar with the school's LMS and using technology previously in classes helped them to improve their writing level from in terms of the teaching and learning process. This also reflects the importance given to the use of technology in all school stages due to the system in the UAE and the stipulations of the Ministry of Education. Most of the students also stated that using technology was helpful for them to learn English in general, and this reflects the vital role of technology in the process of teaching and learning. A high number of students mentioned that using technology in cooperative learning activities helped them to improve their writing skills and enhanced their efficacy of learning. Finally, a high number of students also mentioned that they worked harder when technology was used and interacted better with their peers. This also might be due to the fact that the current generation of students who are identified as 'digital natives' are interested in technology, smart devices and other technological tools. This can also reflect that most students, especially the shy ones, prefer to communicate with others and work with others through technology. Most students were satisfied with the technological tools and platforms used in the intervention, and this reflects the quality of some technological tools and platforms that can be even free for the use of schools and educators. The interpretation of data of the students' survey indicates that students have positive feelings towards the usefulness of technology in their ESL classes, especially for the process of teaching and learning writing.

5.1.4 Students' Surveys-Part Two

Part two of the students' surveys was about the perceived easiness of technology use. The data of the second part indicated that students did not have issues in dealing with technology and that they found using technology easy based on their existing technical knowledge in their classrooms in different subjects. A high number of students stated that it was easy for them to use the school's LMS in their learning, and this because they used it before. In addition, the highest percentage of students mentioned that it was easy for them to use the new technological tools and platforms required during the intervention. This might be due to the students' technological skills and the fact that these platforms and tools are easy and

straightforward to use. In addition, most students believed that using technology facilitated their English education and helped in improving their writing skills, and this sheds light on the role of technology in making the learning process easier for those who can afford to use technology. Finally, most students revealed that they did not have issues in troubleshooting simple issues in technology, and they also mentioned that it was easy to communicate with their peers through technology.

5.1.5 Previous literature

A critical finding of the study is that teachers were supported by their previous knowledge of the LMS and the different technological tools which made it easier for them to use new technological tools. This finding concurs with the findings of Wilson, Ritzhaupt and Cheng (2020) who confirmed that pre-service teacher education is essential for teachers to build on the knowledge base of technology and expand this knowledge to help them in their teaching. Another finding is that teachers found cooperative learning activities help in improving the students' writing skills. This finding agrees with the findings of Nair and Sanai (2018), who concluded that using cooperative learning activities was helpful to improve their students' descriptive writing skills.

Another finding of this study is that teachers found technology very helpful to incorporate in cooperative learning, and this finding agrees with the findings of Johnson and Johnson (2014) who stated that incorporating technology in cooperative learning makes leads to a more successful educational experience. Teachers also found out that using technology in cooperative learning activities improves students' skills in writing and this agrees with Johnson and Johnson (2014, p.4) who stated: "Technology can facilitate learning how to write, improving the quality of one's writing, and working together in producing one document authored by the whole group." The teachers also found that students worked harder when they were engaged in cooperative learning activities. This finding agrees with the findings of Nichols and Miller (1994) who stated that the learners in the cooperative classroom showed significantly more significant gains than the proficiency in the subject of study, they developed efficacy, intrinsic valuing of the subject, and learning goal orientation. The study also found that students interacted in a better way with their peers and this finding

concur with the findings of Awada and Gutiérrez-Colón (2019) who concluded that cooperative learning activities improved the communication amongst students.

However, another finding of the current study is that cooperative learning enhanced the efficacy of students. This finding disagrees with the findings of Yun and Park (2012) who explored the significance of cooperative learning in improving college students' English proficiency in Korea and checked cooperative learning activities and the learners' self-efficacy. The findings stated that cooperative learning was useful in improving college students' English proficiency, but it did not influence the students' self-efficacy.

For students' attitude, the current study concluded that there were positive attitudes towards using technology in cooperative learning activities and thought that it improved their writing skills. This finding agrees with the findings of Aghajani and Adloo (2018), who concluded that online cooperative learning had a good and a positive impact on the students' skills of writing and on their attitudes when they used the Telegram application. Another finding of the current study is that students thought cooperative learning motivated them to work harder. This finding agrees with the findings of Tran (2019) who explored the effect of cooperative learning activities and lecturing on students and found that using cooperative learning significantly enhanced students' motivation and their desire to work harder, and the findings of Gerald and Allan (2018) who concluded that the students had positive attitudes and better performance in their course when cooperative learning activities were employed in class.

Chapter Six: Conclusion

This chapter presents the conclusion of the study and restates the findings along with their pedagogical implications. This chapter also presents recommendations and ideas for future research.

6.1 Summary of the main findings

The main findings of the study can be summarised in the following section. First, for teachers, it was found that teachers perceived the use of technology in ESL classes as useful in terms of pedagogy and teaching and learning. The teachers also revealed that their students benefited from the intervention and interacted better with their peers. In general, the students' English skills were found by the teachers to be improved with a specific focus on the writing skills. Not only that, but the teachers found out that their students worked harder and had better interaction when technology was used in their cooperative learning activities. Second, the teachers felt it was easy to use and adapt to the new technological tools and platforms used in the intervention due to their previous knowledge and previous work with technology in the classroom. The teacher revealed that they were able to solve simple internet and technology problems when needed. The teachers felt that using technology made their students' learning easier. Third, the students stated that using technology in their cooperative learning activities helped them in the process of learning the English language with a specific focus on writing skills. They also found the technology useful in motivating them to work harder. Last, the students revealed that using technology in their learning was straightforward and did not lead to any difficulties; on the contract, it facilitated their learning and interaction with their peers. They also mentioned that they could solve any simple technological issues when they encountered them.

6.2 Pedagogical implications

The study leads to some important pedagogical implications. The findings confirm the usefulness of using digital technology in ESL classes. Learning another language is a special cognitive process; therefore, English classes are different from any other subject classes that might be taught in the students' native language. Therefore, using technology can be very

helpful in improving the teaching and learning process in language classes. Previous knowledge for both students and teachers in using technology helped a lot in making both groups adapt to the new platforms and the new technological tools used during the intervention. This reflects that we should add on this knowledge and provide more teacher training and student training in the area of technology for the sake of education.

Troubleshooting simple problems is also another important area that should be considered for both teachers and students, so they can deal with technology easily without having to contact their IT department frequently. Finally, writing skills which are considered productive skills can be improved and creativity can be triggered through exposure to technology and the different platforms and websites. This access to technology can promote the students' writing skills in specific.

6.3 Limitations of the Study

There are limitations in this study. First, the technological platforms used were not specific to teaching writing skills; however, they proved efficient in designing and allowing the students to participate in cooperative learning activities. Second, the study utilised quantitative data through surveys only; therefore, there was not much in-depth data or details about why the teachers/students felt this was whether positive and negative or why their opinion was like that. The survey design also did not allow the participants to give details about what was successful and what was not during their practices. The negative views, although they were very limited, they were not justified. This study could have used triangulation design by using students'/teachers' interviews to have a better understanding of their attitudes towards the usefulness and the easiness of use of technology. The teachers could have also described their best practices or the specific challenges they faced to benefit other educators. Third, the study could have benefited from focusing on the four language skills, but this study focused only on writing skills.

6.4 Recommendations for Future Research

The researcher recommends future research on the technological platforms, tools and application that particularly focus on teaching and learning the writing skills to explore this area more and to check their effectiveness. Also, the researcher recommends more research on the existing knowledge of both teachers and students to find ways to add to this knowledge

mainly from the educational point of view to help them excel in their school subjects. While much research on teachers' professional development, the researcher recommends future research on the effect of students' training on useful technological tools, platforms and applications that are used for the purpose of education. Future research can also be done on the extent of knowledge that teachers should have about fixing simple IT issues to ease the burden on IT departments at schools and to add to the teachers' knowledge. Finally, the researcher recommends future research on the use of technology and the other language skills like listening, speaking and reading.

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Appendix A: Teachers' Consent form

My name is Shorouk Mostafa, and I will be doing a research study for my master's in education dissertation. I selected you to participate in my research study about cooperative learning because I am looking for English teachers in this school.

Study Purpose: The main aim of this study is to explore teachers' attitudes towards using digital technology in cooperative learning. Cooperative learning is defined as the process of breaking a classroom of students into small groups so they can discover a new concept together and help each other learn. This is done in this school in the writing classes through different technological tools and platforms in the face to face/remote learning classes.

Benefit: You will help the researcher in doing her research study and obtain her master's degree.

Risk: There are no risks for taking part in this study. This study will not affect your job or your status at school.

Procedures: If you agree to take part in this study, you will be required to

- 1- Teach with technology in your writing classes for two weeks in your normal class time.
- 2- Answer questions for one survey. It will take less than 10 minutes of your time.

Anonymity: The identities of the teachers will not be revealed to any party, and your names will not be required in the survey.

Confidentiality:

The data obtained through this survey will be confidential and will only be shared with the researcher's supervisor for the purpose of her master's dissertation.

Your Participation: You will participate in this study on a voluntary basis, you can withdraw from the research any time you like without the need for any justification.

Supervisor: My supervisor's name is Dr.Emad Abu Ayyash, and I am doing this study at the British University in Dubai. You can contact me on my email 20182999@student.buid.ac.ae if you have any questions or concerns.

Informed Consent: I read all the information about this research study, and I agree to take part in the research study.

Teacher Signature:

Appendix B: Students' Consent form

My name is Shorouk Mostafa, and I will be doing a research study for my master's in education dissertation. I selected you to participate in my research study about cooperative learning because I am looking for students in this school.

Study Purpose: The main aim of this study is to explore students' attitudes towards using digital technology in cooperative learning. Cooperative learning is defined as the process of breaking a classroom of students into small groups so they can discover a new concept together and help each other learn. This is done in this school in the writing classes through different technological tools and platforms in the face to face/remote learning classes.

Benefit: You will help the researcher in doing her research study and obtain her master's degree.

Risk: There are no risks for taking part in this study. This study will not affect your grades or your status at school.

Procedures: If you agree to take part in this study, you will be required to

1- Study with technology and work in groups in your writing classes for two weeks in your normal class time.

2- Answer questions for one survey. It will take less than 10 minutes of your time.

Anonymity: The identities of the students will not be revealed to any party, and your names will not be required in the survey.

Confidentiality: The data obtained through by this survey will be confidential and will only be shared with the researcher's supervisor for the purpose of her master's dissertation.

Your Participation: You will participate in this study on a voluntary basis, you can withdraw from the research study any time you like without the need for any justification.

Supervisor: My supervisor's name is Dr.Emad Abu Ayyash, and I am doing this study at the British University in Dubai. You can contact me on my email 20182999@student.buid.ac.ae if you have any questions or concerns.

Informed Consent: I read all the information about this research study, and I agree to take part in the research study.

Student/Parent Signature:

Appendix C: Teachers' Survey

Part I

1. Being familiar with the school LMS and the used technological tools helped my students to improve their writing level.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
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2. Using technology in Cooperative Learning is effective for my students to learn English in general.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
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3. Using technology in Cooperative Learning is effective for my students to improve their writing skills in specific.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
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4. Utilising technology in Cooperative Learning enhances the efficacy of my students' learning.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
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5. Using technology in Cooperative Learning made my students work harder.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
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6. The technological tools I used in my Cooperative Learning activities were useful and added to my student's writing knowledge.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
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7. Using technology in Cooperative Learning made my students' interact better with their peers.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
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Part II

8. It is easy for me to use the school LMS in my students' cooperative activities when learning English.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
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9. It is easy for me to learn to use Collaborative platforms concerning Cooperative Learning.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
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10. The use of Cooperative Learning facilitates my students' English education

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
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11. The technological tools I used in designing my students' Cooperative Learning activities were easy to use.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
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12. I have no issues in using the internet and the different websites in to design activities for my students' English learning.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
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13. I can troubleshoot simple internet problems to be able to contact my students, design and work with them on the activities.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
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14. It is easy to communicate with my students through technology.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
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Appendix D: Students' Survey

Part I

1. Being familiar with the school LMS and the used technological tools helped me improve my writing level.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
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2. Using technology in Cooperative Learning is effective in learning English in general.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
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3. Using technology in Cooperative Learning is effective in improving my writing skills in specific.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
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4. Utilising technology in Cooperative Learning enhances the efficacy of my learning.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
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5. Using technology in Cooperative Learning made me work harder.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
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6. The technological tools I used in my Cooperative Learning activities were useful and added to my writing knowledge.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
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7. Using technology in Cooperative Learning made me interact better with my peers.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
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Part II

8. It is easy for me to use the school LMS in my cooperative activities when learning English.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
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9. It is easy for me to learn to use Collaborative platforms concerning Cooperative Learning.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
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10. The use of Cooperative Learning facilitates my English education

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------------------------	-------	----------------

11. The technological tools I used in my Cooperative Learning activities were easy to use.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
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12. I have no issues in using the internet and the different websites in my English learning.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------------------------	-------	----------------

13. I can troubleshoot simple internet problems to be able to contact my peers and work with them on the activities.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
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14. It is easy to communicate with my peers through technology.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
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Appendix D: Task Sample from the intervention

Work with your group members to write an essay about the following prompt:

Many parents give children a weekly or monthly allowance regardless of their behaviour because they believe an allowance teaches children to be financially responsible. Other parents only give children an allowance as a reward for completing chores or when they have behaved properly. Explain what you think parents should do and why (adapted from Learningexpress, 2014).

We will work on this essay together in two phases: the planning phase and the writing phase. Each phase should be finished in one week.

Instructions

1-The teacher will give you an overview of academic essay writing through a Near pod session. Please make sure to engage in the activities during the session.

Now you can proceed to the planning phase (Week 1)

2-Choose a team leader for your group (4 members in one group)

3-You should use the discussion forums on the school's LMS to discuss your project (brainstorm for ideas) and assign tasks (tasks should be assigned by the team leader).

At this point, seek approval from your teacher through the school LMS

4- Each student will be responsible for one paragraph of the essay (consult the rubric from individual marks and group marks).

5- Start by writing an outline as a group for your essay.

At this point, seek approval from your teacher through the school LMS

Now you can proceed to the writing phase (Week 2).

6-Use one Google document so you can all see each other's work. (share the link with the teacher and allow edit for all)

7-Keep the discussion going through the school's LMS. Your teacher will comment some times. Start writing your paragraph.

8-Do the Kahoot test about references as teams.

9-Do research on your part, and use at least one reference to support what you write.

At this point, seek approval from your teacher through the school LMS

10- Each student will be assigned one paragraph to review and proofread for their colleagues.

11- The final product will be published through Google documents.

12-The teacher will grade the students' submission through the LMS and give feedback.

13-Students will fix the issues according to their teacher's feedback and publish a final version of the essay.

14- The teacher will give the group the final grade.