

Review

The Impact of Peer-To-Peer Education on Improving English Language Proficiency at MICE in Uzbekistan

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The study aims to address the following research questions: Does Peer Collaboration-Based Learning motivate HTU students to perform better in their oral ability tests as compared with Traditional Teacher-Centered Learning? Do HTU students prefer Peer Collaboration-Based Learning to Traditional Teacher-Centered Learning in terms of the learning style in the classroom? Is there any significant difference between Peer Collaboration-Based Learning and Traditional Teacher-Centered Learning in terms of HTU students' performance on oral communication ability tests in the two different classrooms? Data collected from a survey of HTU students at National Kaohsiung University of Hospitality and Tourism consisted of an effective sample of 100. The study employed the statistical models, including T-test, ANCOVA, and Pearson Correlation, to perform the analyses. The following are the findings: First, students became more interested in and held more positive attitude toward PCBL than those in the traditional lecture instruction in MICE courses and classroom activities. Second, PCBL had greater effects on the students' motivation toward learning English and could be better than TTCL in terms of the enhancement of students' positive learning motivation. Third, the overall experimental group obtained striking improvement in their oral communication in MICE activities after the PCBL, in contrast to the control group that had no effects in their English oral achievement under the traditional teaching method. The results indicate some pedagogical implications based on students' learning preferences and teachers' teaching approaches and skills. Peer Collaboration-Based Learning, as Cooperative Learning, can help teachers enhance students' oral communication ability in the circle of MICE. Most studies focused on the advantages of cooperative language learning in enhancing students' reading comprehension and writing ability inside the classroom. However, little research explored the relation between the Cooperative Learning and traditional language teaching based on the improvement of students' listening and speaking abilities. The present study investigates the effect the Peer Collaboration-Based Learning on enhancing HTU Students' English oral communication proficiency exclusively. The finding justified the value of the benefits of Peer Collaboration-Based Learning in helping students enhance their oral communication ability and their performance in the field of MICE in Taiwan.

Keywords: Peer collaboration-based; learning Oral communication proficiency MICE; Traditional teacher-centered learning; Cooperative learning

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INTRODUCTION

Collaborative learning methods can enhance students' language proficiency dynamically in their learning process and involve them in the authentic work place situation (Jackson, Brummel, Pollet, & Greer, 2013). In the past two decades, scholars like Johnson and Johnson (1994), Olsen and Kagan (1992) and Slavin (1995) proposed Cooperative Learning (CL) as an effective teaching method on foreign or second language education. Likewise, CL as the solution to the problems in the English instruction in Taiwan and confirmed the effectiveness of EFL classroom settings integrated with CL was highly advocated by researchers in Taiwan (Chen, 1998, 1999, 2005; Chiu, 2002; Lai, 2002; Liang, 2002; Tsai, 1998; Wei, 1997; Yeh, 2004). According to McGroarty (1989), students gain both in comprehension and in production of the target language through Cooperative Learning (CL) more citations. McGroarty (cited in Liang, 2002) also emphasized that tasks used in CL nourish many different types of verbal exchange and oral communication. However, EFL teachers lack the encouraging evidence of CL instruction on speaking ability taking place in the classrooms due to scanty studies investigating CL in English teaching, especially in hospitality and tourism colleges (Li, 1998; Lin, 1992; Tsai, 1998). Even no studies were found related to the improvement of HTU students' English oral communication ability in their future career in the MICE businesses. Thus, this study aimed to explore the learning effectiveness through Peer Collaboration-Based Learning (PCBL), which could be a method for teaching in the classroom involving pairs and small groups of learners by means of cooperative activities to satisfy the needs as indicated in the above-mentioned summary of those opinions. Broadly defined, Peer Collaboration-Based Learning in the present study is one kind Cooperative Learning (CL), which actually can help HTU students improve their oral communication ability and linguistically perform better in the MICE businesses.

As a matter of fact, MICE, as abbreviated from *Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Exhibitions*, represents a sector of tourism that includes business events and activities. The MICE Industry integrates different aspects of business, such as trade, transportation, and finance, and helps international transactions go beyond boundaries of geography, time and space. Through the multiplier effect, the MICE industry triggers massive comprehensive economic output and, by virtue of its features of three-high, three-great and three-advantage (Bor, 2006; Huang, 2006, 2008; Lin, 2006), serves as an engine of national economic development (Wang, 2008). Plenty of MICE activities revolve around business. The essential to business are the meetings (Forden, 2005) and one of its most powerful tools of communication, the oral

presentation (Deane & Reynolds, 2006). Good meeting skills such as summarizing, confirming and establishing action points serve to smooth procedures, enhance understanding and diminish resistance, and so make meetings more productive and efficient (Brand, 2007), but such skills do not come naturally: they must be learned (Rahman, 2010). Most pre-presentations focus on the fundamental skill of oral communication—speaking (Rahman, 2010), its counterpart—listening, and skills specific to presenting, such as the use of multimedia (Dignen, 2007), control of body language, maintaining appropriate eye contact with the audience, and use of sign posts. The ability to present fluently in English is a competitive advantage for both the employee (Chang, 2009) and the organization she represents. High employment and impressive economic output make the MICE industry a promising and investment-intensive sector throughout the world.

A successful MICE industry needs workers with highly polished individual skills and the ability to work well with others. The Cooperative Learning method encourages students to work together, accomplish shared learning goals and maximize learning from a given activity (Johnson, Johnson, Holubec, & Roy, 1984). Much research suggests that Cooperative Learning may produce higher achievement than direct methods (Johnson, Johnson, & Stanne, 2000). Its significant positive effects on learner's attitudes toward the subject of study can increase learner success in English for Specific Purposes (Gömleksiz, 2007). In fields as diverse as aviation and medicine, students must acquire the normal English proficiency required to freely exchange their ideas on specialty issues (Aiguo, 2007), creating a need for “an English program that would facilitate language learning in general and satisfy the specific needs of the [given] profession” (Chia, Johnson, Chia, & Olive, 1999: p.112). This is the purview of English for Special Purposes (ESP).

In the context of this study, vision is imaginative insight into one's own learning. It arises from one's own aspirations for the future and motivates action, both stimulating and guiding the individual toward achieving a goal (Masuda, Kane, Shoptaugh, & Minor, 2010). A productive personal vision can indirectly energize and improve performance (Masuda et al., 2010). Group vision can help a company's employees unite to complete an assigned task. Vision vis-à-vis a learning project can expand students' horizons (Chang, 2009). In a broader context, learner vision motivates learning aimed at developing a career. As it is, this study contributes to the literature through employing Cooperative Learning (PCBL) into the course design at a hospital and tourism university and addressing the subsequent research questions.

1. Does Peer Collaboration-Based Learning motivate students to perform better in their oral communication ability tests as compared with Traditional Teacher-Centered Learning?
2. Do students prefer Peer Collaboration-Based Learning to Traditional Teacher-Centered Learning in terms of the learning style in the classroom?
3. Is there any significant difference between Peer Collaboration-Based Learning and Traditional Teacher-Centered Learning in terms of students' performance on oral ability in the two different classrooms?

The study can provide a better learning style for students in their language learning, especially improving their speaking ability. Besides, through brainstorming and peer collaboration, HTU students can share their thoughts and ideas with each other, and those low-achievement students can get help from their high-achievement counterparts. In addition, the present study may suggest a better teaching method for current language teachers. It can help language instructors to cultivate students' autonomy and independent thinking and even enhance their ability of communication application, integration, and synthesis. Moreover, teachers are able to develop their own teaching strategies in accordance with various levels of EFL students. Furthermore, the survey of students' perceptions of and attitudes toward Peer Collaboration-Based Learning activities may serve as references for future teachers to integrate collaborative learning with their current instruction in EFL classes. Also, this study is significant in that it can serve as a reference for MICE English teaching and learning, offering meaningful and useful information for instructors of MICE English and thereby helping learners acquire more productive language skills.

Literature review

Oral performance in meetings

Hulit, Howard, and Fahey (2010) indicated that oral language facilitates infants to express their needs and to reproduce their caregivers' and parents' behavior and speaking. Oral language from infants' caregivers and parents is also an important source for them to imitate and recreate their own oral language. Hill (2010) pointed out that oral language helped learners organize and link ideas in school situations and provided them with supports for cognitive development in socializing processes, implicitly resulting in good academic and work performances. Additionally, according to Swain's (1993) Output Hypothesis, which states that "output or production may contribute to language acquisition" (p. 24), oral English production plays an indispensable role in effective oral English skills development. In terms of

second language acquisition, a learning together approach creates a space for teachers and students to join their typically separate communities in order to learn more about their roles in supporting their English language learning (Ning, 2010). In the pursuit of increasingly effective methods for language instruction, Cooperative Learning has the potential to improve acquisition while also creating a learning experience that, for many students, is a socially rich exchange that more closely mirrors the experience of real everyday interactions than traditional teaching approaches.

Oral communication is an important part of meetings. Oral performance in meetings is to not only make a public speech, but also display one's oral influence with the other attendees. Marra (2008) emphasized that learning on meetings issue not only involves participating discussion, but also how to organize and run a meeting. In order to hold the meeting effectively and efficiently, the chairperson should perform constituting topics to discuss, stick to meeting agenda, and monitoring attendees' progress. Rogerson-Revell (2008) indicated that well designed topic and order management in meetings could reduce unpredicted interruption. For those unclear native speakers, Webber (2005) suggested the chairperson provide help, such as making summary, hinting terminology, or extending speaking time limit. For those non-native subjects in international meetings, Rogerson-Revell (2008) also suggested the chairperson help non-native speakers by summarizing key points, introducing technical terms or giving them enough speaking time to enhance and encourage communication in the international meetings setting. In meetings, chairperson or attendees conduct different functions, but oral language and communication skills are center of the meeting situations.

Skills of meeting in English

Nickerson (2005) reported that using English in global business environment was a worldwide tendency. MICE industry is no exception. English used in international MICE business settings is deemed as a lingua franca (Hincks, 2010; Louhiala-Salminen, Charles, & Kankaanranta, 2005; Nickerson, 2005). Muriel (2006) indicated that the attendees or visitors for the MICE activity often used English to communicate and share knowledge. Skills of English meeting are the skills to make English meetings more productive. Dobson (1999) indicated that speaking with confidence would make one's communication easier to produce the intended result at meetings. Employing meeting skills would facilitate group communication and decision-making. Barnes (2007) examined a corpus of meeting interactions, and the meeting was for sharing knowledge and making decision at a medical school. The study found that repeat speaking, a specific but often seen oral

meeting skill, facilitated the movement of discussion from one topic to the next one. Nixon and Littlepage (1992) examined the relationships between meeting effectiveness with its procedures. The findings suggested that appropriate group procedures were critical skill to direct the meetings and it could make attendees to perform better.

The cooperative learning theory

In recent years, the concept of Cooperative Learning has been widely applied to ESL/EFL learning (Olsen and Kagan, 1992; Quinn and Molloy, 1992). Most of the studies show satisfactory effects of ESL/EFL learning. Olsen and Kagan (1992:1-2) reviewed some studies related to Cooperative Learning. Their review indicates nonnative English speakers show more gains in language acquisition and academic achievement in Cooperative Learning classes than in traditional whole-class instruction. Besides, the carefully structured and abundant interactions in Cooperative Learning classes between students also help students clarify their meanings, elaborate explanation, resolve discrepancies, and finally enhance the comprehension of learning material. Even in the interaction process, the students have more opportunities to use the target language, but it seems not easy for them to do the same through traditional whole-class instruction. Since the Peer Collaboration-Based Learning is a kind of learning activity similar to Cooperative Learning, the discussion on how Cooperative Learning makes learning effects of ESL/EFL learning enhanced.

Features of cooperative learning

Olsen and Kagan (1992) once defined Cooperative Learning as that Cooperative Learning is group learning activity organized so that learning is dependent on the socially structured exchange of information between learners in groups and in which each learner is held accountable for his or her own learning and is motivated to increase the learning of others (Olsen & Kagan, 1992:8). Johnson and Johnson (1999) proposed five basic components of effective Cooperative Learning. They are positive interdependence, face-to-face promotive interaction, individual and group accountability, appropriate use of social skills, and group processing. Positive inter-dependence is the most essential element in Cooperative Learning. Each member in the learning group has to bear in mind "they sink or swim together." In the design of Cooperative Learning, the group performance directly influences every member's grades. Therefore, each group member's efforts are required and indispensable for group success and each group member has to make a unique contribution to the joint efforts because of his or her resources or role and task

responsibilities. Then, each member of the group would care about himself or herself and would help other members to achieve the teaching or learning goal. Face-to-face promotive interaction is another element of Cooperative Learning. The group members meet face to face to work together to complete assignments and promote each other's success. The meeting schedule needs amending so that members of the group could have the chance for positive interdependence to develop and achieve the group's goals.

Individual accountability means each member's performance. Group accountability means the group's performance. Traditional competitive learning method makes students learn individually and, what is worse, in order to gain the final success, students tend not to help other learners in the class. Cooperative Learning helps students learn together. However, that does not mean that members in one group would just have to perform a task and everybody gets the same score. Each member of the group should achieve the learning goal individually. If one member does not fulfill his or her share and responsibility, other members of the group might feel upset and disappointed. Social skills are those skills, such as negotiation or discussion, which students use to interact with each other. In Cooperative Learning, interaction among group members is crucial. Therefore, having good interaction among group members is a promise of success. However, students are not born with these skills, and therefore, teachers have to teach students these social skills so that they can interact with each other effectively. Group processing means the learning process that the whole group works together to achieve the final goal. The process should be recorded regularly, based on which the teacher or the students could discuss with other group members to (a) describe what member actions were helpful and unhelpful and (b) make decisions about what actions to continue or change. Such discussion could have the following benefits: (1) better relationship between group members, (2) enhancement of Cooperative Learning skills, (3) feedback of performance, and (4) self-examination of the performance.

To sum up, there is no interpersonal exchange in both competitive and individualistic learning situations (Presseisen, 1992). Nevertheless, in a Cooperative Learning group, the superiority of cooperative over competitive and individualistic learning increases as the task becomes more abstract, requires more problem-solving skills, and needs higher-level reasoning strategy or cognitive reasoning strategies, such as comparison, contrast, analysis, synthesis, or even problem-solving abilities. Under a broad range of conditions, cooperative efforts result in higher achievement and greater productivity than competitive or individualistic efforts. Generally, cooperative efforts result in greater interpersonal attraction and more social support than

competitive or individualistic efforts.

Cooperation in MICE

Cooperation is a core element of the MICE industry (International Association of Professional Congress Organisers (IAPCO), 2009), which involves resources from governmental, private, industrial, academic, and public sectors. In other words, MICE industry develops based on cooperation. Government support is the strongest standpoint to spring up MICE industry. The financial sponsorship from private companies is also a substantial assistance to hold a MICE event. Media coverage plays the role as a propeller to heat the MICE activity up and draw the public's attention. However, the most important part of the joined effort is from participation of the public. Local residents, volunteers, well-trained employees and students create a friendly atmosphere and that is a decisive element to success. After all, government, academy, publicity, industry, and media sectors altogether cooperate to make MICE successful.

Cooperation on campus provides students with chances to learn more by helping each other, sharing with peers. According to Brandes (2006) and Haigh (2002), students must learn skills for working in an international and multicultural context. Since one feature of MICE attendees is their multicultural background (Goodwin, 2006), students should take advantage of joining MICE activities to enhance their professional skills and obtain cooperation with team members. The most frequent engagement in MICE industry for students is being volunteers. Chan (2007) claimed that, students taking part in MICE activities not only could apply skills they learnt, but also became more confident to cooperate with their peer. A study done by Lau and Wong (2010) indicated that after participating in a real life MICE project, students' acquirement through Cooperative Learning was largely improved. In brief, Co-operative Learning accelerates students' learning and enhances their cooperative skills. Brandes (2006) and Haigh (2002) suggested that students learn knowledge and skills for working in an international and multicultural context. Since a prominent attribute of MICE attendees is their multicultural background (Goodwin, 2006), students should take advantage of joining MICE activities to enhance their professional skills and obtain cooperation with team members. The most frequent engagement in MICE industry for students is being volunteers. Chan (2007) claimed that, students taking part in MICE activities not only could apply skills they learnt, but also became more confident to cooperate with their peer. A study done by Lau and Wong (2010) indicated that after participating in a real life MICE project, students' skills of cooperation was largely improved. In brief, Cooperative Learning accelerates students' learning and enhances

their cooperative skills.

Cooperation from the public is the best competitive condition to foster local MICE industry. Both the local residents and people from surrounding areas are all involved. Before an MICE event takes place, the hosting city undergoes a variety of improvements or constructions to create a better MICE environment. Local involvement and cooperation are critical for remodeling the city to compete with other MICE destinations (Henderson, 2000). During the hosting period, the residents help promote the MICE event (Avraham, 2004). They could be volunteers to provide supportive services to foreign attendees or the audience of the MICE activities. By cooperation, hosting large-scale events often generates positive emotional effect on the public. As an example, the 2008 Olympic Games highlighted the cooperation from the public, especially the younger generation. Tian and Johnston (2008) indicated that the goal to present the "best ever" image worldwide inspired the public to cooperate and contribute voluntarily. Media plays a supporting role, but it has striking influence in MICE industry. Since media can easily break the limit of time and space, governments worldwide make every effort to increase the media exposure (Yuen, 2008). Through media coverage, the hosting nation, city, and organization skillfully project a positive and vivid image to the world. Hiller (1995) indicated that media not only promoted the event but also enhanced the public participation. Effects of media are more than to promote the MICE event. Avraham (2004) claimed that applying different media strategies might reverse negative impression or stereotypes of the hosting nation or city. In short, media is a sup-portive but indispensable help in MICE industry.

Cooperation is the core of today's MICE industry operation. In order to maximum the benefit and maintain the service quality, the joint effort is necessary. Strategic alliances integrate different kinds of business resources and allow businesses to offer more competitive price to attendees (Yang, Sparks, & Li, 2008). The hosting organization reciprocates by endorsing cooperating, or "official", services such as airlines, hotels, and brokers (Hiller, 1995). To provide quality service, different kinds of companies unite and offer preferential price to those attendees. Sponsorship is another typical form of cooperation from private sector. Cooperating with local government and associations to organize local MICE activity, companies provide financial or technical sponsor. Sponsoring companies benefit from rooting their image in the local community (Yang et al., 2008). Cooperation not only functions in domestic public-private sectors, but also between international companies and associations (Hiller, 1995). Cooperation between government agencies, enterprises, associations, communities, and residents generates the development of MICE industry and result in comprehensive economic development. Shatkin (2007)

indicated that the public-private partnerships and cooperation between surrounding cities was increasing and the influence continued to expand. To sum up, cooperation is critical function of the MICE industry and a variety of recourses are integrated.

METHODOLOGY

The model of research hypotheses

Based on the research questions, the research hypotheses are addressed as follows.

H1a-b: Peer Collaboration-Based Learning motivates HTU students to perform better in their oral ability tests.

H2a-b: HTU students prefer Peer Collaboration-Based Learning to Traditional Teacher-Centered Learning in terms of the learning style in the classroom.

H3a-b: There is a significant difference between Peer Collaboration-Based Learning and Traditional Teacher-Centered Learning in terms of HTU students' performance on oral communication ability tests in the two different classrooms.

Participants

One hundred third and fourth graders in two classes at National Kaohsiung University of Hospitality and Tourism in Kaohsiung city participated in this present study. The 100 students were divided into two classes: one was Experimental Class; the other was Control Class. Students in the Experimental class were composed of 10 groups, each of which consisted of five students including high- and low-achievers. The researchers divided students based on students' English scores of their final achievement exam in the last semester. Small group learning may stimulate (Slavin, 1996): (1) motivation – the group stimulates its individual members, (2) cohesiveness – the members feel responsible for the group results, (3) development – the members grow intellectually by weighing each other's arguments, and (4) cognition – by verbalizing their thoughts, the members deepen their knowledge.

The optimal group size in collaborative learning is not fixed. In most problem-based learning curricula, 10 students are gathered in small group sessions (Dolmans & Schmidt, 2006). Miflin (2004) writes that when a small group is used it "cannot function well beyond eight members." An effective group size in collaborative learning is mostly argued to be five or six. The arguments for this size are: not so many students per tutor (Miflin, 2004), a group size just reaching the point in which enough views and knowledge are available for the

problem-solving process (Lohman & Finkelstein, 2000), more balanced discussions (Moust, Roebertsen, Savelberg, & De Rijk, 2005), and promotion of individual development (McLean, Van Wyk, Peters-Futre, & Higgings-Optiz, 2006).

The teaching time scheduled for the two classes in this study was finished within 12 weeks. The Experimental Class was under the training by means of the Cooperative Learning method. The aim of the course is to acquire the skills and knowledge of English oral communication ability and English meetings. Each group was asked to make an English presentation and host an English meeting on an assigned topic related to meetings, incentive tours, conventions or exhibitions (hereafter MICE). The procedures of the English instruction (PCBL) given in these two classes were made as follows.

The procedures in peer collaboration-based learning

To begin with, in Experimental Class the English teacher gave students some questions based on the contents of their text materials so as to make students do group discussion orally in every class during this scheduled instruction period. In addition, after group discussion, the teacher arranged each group to present what they had discussed by employing different types of oral communication activities, such as MICE, debates, and gave some comments thereafter. Moreover, the teacher gave students a test to investigate whether they had better performance through this kind of classroom learning at the end of the instruction period. With respect to Control Class, the English teacher instructed students with the contents based on the same text materials without giving students any questions for group discussion. However, some questions were given only for the interaction between the teacher and students. Students had to listen and take notes of what the teacher had taught in class. After 12 weeks, a test was launched in order to find out if students in this class achieved a better performance by means of the Teacher-Centered Instruction. The students' performance on oral communication examination in this class was compared with those students' test performance in the experimental class so as to probe into which teaching procedures and learning style were beneficial and helpful to teachers and students respectively.

Instruments

The examination paper that was used to test students' learning achievement was composed of sentence recitation, interpretation, question-answering, exposition, and picture description tests. All the tests were made in the speaking form. The researcher designed oral test questions checked and revised by two native speakers

having been teaching English in universities for many years. They are quite familiar with the contents of various English textbooks currently used in colleges and universities. The effects of PCBL on students were indicated through the scores of students' performance on the examination paper. The questionnaire designed by the researcher included two sections. The first section consisted of 28 questions for students to show their motivation and interests in English learning, while the other part was composed of 25 questions created for the same groups to express their opinions about Peer Collaboration-Based Learning. The statistical models of SPSS for Windows used in the present study were T-test models. These models were used to analyze the data collected from students' answers to the questionnaire and based on their performance on oral examination. The research tried to find out whether there was any significant difference between students' opinions of the Peer Collaboration-Based Learning. Moreover, the study probed into whether there was any significant difference of academic performance between students in the Experimental Class and those in the Control Class after the treatment. The statistical results were the important indicators of teaching method and learning style for language teachers' instruction and students' studying foreign languages respectively in the classroom.

Data collection and analysis

Quantitative analysis was conducted using SPSS for Windows XP. A paired samples *t*-test was used to determine whether there were any significant differences between the subjects' responses on the pre-study and post-study questionnaires before and after the PCBL. An

independent samples *t*-test was employed to clarify whether there were any significant differences between the two groups of subjects' academic performance before and after the PCBL. The null hypotheses would be rejected, or the research hypotheses would be accepted, at the 0.05 level of statistical significance.

The data in this study embraced students' answers to the questionnaire and were collected from the students' performance on their taking the oral examination after the experiment. Each group member should try to answer some oral questions put forth by two native English teachers teaching MICE English in universities. The English teachers gave each student scores based on their oral performance. In addition, the answers to the questionnaire and the scores of examination were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively.

RESULTS

Effects of the Peer Collaboration-Based Learning (PCBL) on students' motivation toward performing better in their language learning

Independent Samples Test was conducted to compare the pretest scores of Exam of Learning Achievement between the experimental and the control groups. According to Table 1, the statistical result of students' English proficiency before the treatment reveals that the difference of pretest scores between the experimental and the control groups does not reach the significance level ($t = -1.065$, $p = .289$). Actually, we could further infer that students may not have the preference of one learning style over the other one with respect to PCBL and TTCL before the implementation of the treatment.

Table 1. Independent samples test results of the pretest of English proficiency in experimental and control groups.

Class	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>Sd.</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>P</i>
Experimental	50	63.7	18.573	- 1.065	0.29
Control	50	65.9	14.138		

The comparison of students' learning motivation between the experimental and the control groups

In Table 2, the results of the comparison between the two groups' pre-motivation in English learning reveal that the scores of students' pre-motivation ($t = 0.873$, $p = 0.385 > 0.05$) does not reach the significance level. Therefore, it indicated that there was no significant difference in English learning motivation between the experimental and the control groups before the treatment (PCBL) was implemented in the former group.

Table 2. Independent samples test results of the comparison of students' pre-motivation in experimental and control groups before the treatment.

Class	N	M	Sd.	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Experimental	50	35.1	3.11	0.873	0.39
Control	50	35.9	4.41		

Based on Table 3, the post-motivation mean score of the experimental group is 41.7 with a standard deviation of 1.89, while the post-motivation mean score of the control group is 36.2 with a standard deviation of 2.73. Besides, the statistical results of the comparison of the same questionnaire after the experiment indicated that the difference between the experimental and the control groups in their motivation toward English learning actually reached a significant difference level ($t = 5.105$, $p = 0.000 < 0.01$). Therefore, it proved that the effects of PCBL on the students in the Experimental Group were significantly and positively better than the effects of TTCL on the students in the Control Group in terms of their motivation towards learning English in class.

Table 3. Independent samples test results of the comparison of students' post-motivation in experimental and control groups after the treatment.

Class	N	M	Sd.	<i>t</i>	<i>P</i>
Experimental	50	41.7	1.893	5.105	0.00
Control	50	36.2	2.730		

Effects of TTCL and PCBL on enhancing students' learning motivation within the control group and the experimental group respectively before and after the experiment

In Table 4, the statistical results of the comparison of motivation scores in the control group before and after the experiment showed that students in this group did not get motivated toward learning English. The pre-motivation mean score is 35.9 with a standard deviation of 4.41, while the post-motivation mean score is 36.2 with a standard deviation of 2.73. The difference between the scores of pre-motivation and post-motivation actually reached the significance level ($t = 2.97$, $p = 0.316 > 0.05$). Therefore, it obviously revealed that students in the Control Group did not significantly obtain any motivation towards learning English under the Teacher-Centered Instruction.

Table 4. Paired-samples test results of student' pre- and post-motivation in the control group.

Group		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>P</i>
Control	Before	35.9	4.413	2.971	0.32
	After	36.2	2.729		

Based on Table 5, the pre-motivation mean score is 35.1 with a standard deviation of 3.107, while the post-motivation mean score is 41.7 with a standard deviation of 1.893. In addition, the difference between the scores of pre-motivation and post-motivation actually reached the significance level ($t = 2.479$, $p = 0.016 < 0.05$). Therefore, it proved that PCBL had great effects on the students' motivation toward learning English better.

Table 5. Paired-samples test results of the comparison between student' pre-motivation and post-motivation in the experimental group.

Group		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>P</i>
Experimental	Before	35.1	3.107	2.479	0.02
	After	41.3	1.893		

Effects on students' preference of the English learning style in the classroom through PCBL and TTCL

In Table 6, data analyzed from the second part of the questionnaire after the treatment indicated that there was a significant difference ($t = 4.65$, $p = 0.00$) in the preference for English learning style between the Experimental Group ($M = 90.6$, $SD = 12.11$) and the Control Group ($M = 79.7$, $SD = 11.49$). In other words, it showed that the students in the experimental group had significantly stronger preference for PCBL than their counterparts did in the control group.

Table 6. Independent samples test results of the comparison of preference for English learning style in experimental and control groups after the treatment.

Class	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>Sd.</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>P</i>
Experimental	50	90.6	12.110	4.647	0.00
Control	50	79.7	11.485		

Based on Table 7, the data indicated that the experimental group's attitudes toward or preference over English learning style (PCBL) moved forward from the mean of 86.828 and SD of 5.567 before the treatment to the mean of 90.621 and SD of 12.110 after the treatment significantly ($t = 2.530$, $p = 0.014 < 0.05$). Thus, regarding the attitudes toward or preference over PCBL as an English learning style in this present study after the treatment, the Experimental Group showed significant changes in their perspectives. The experimental participants held positive attitudes toward or prefer studying English through PCBL. As it is, such kind of Cooperative Learning did enhance both their interest and achievement in EFL learning, as can be found in the answers to Research Questions 2 and 3 respectively.

Table 7. Paired-samples test results of the experimental group's attitudes toward english learning style before and after treatment ($N = 58$).

Group		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>P</i>
Experimental	Before	86.828	5.567	2.530	0.01
	After	90.621	12.110		

Effects of the Peer Collaboration-Based Learning (PCBL) and Traditional Teacher-Centered Learning (TTCL) on students' learning achievements of communication ability

Students of both the experimental group and the control group were at the similar, intelligent level, as shown in Table 8. From Table 8, the pretest mean score of the experimental group is 63.7 with a standard deviation of 18.57, while the pretest mean score of the control group is 65.9 with a standard deviation of 14.14. The statistical result of the comparison of pretest scores of academic performance on English speaking between these two groups revealed that the speaking ability between the experimental and control groups did not reach the significance level ($t = 1.065$, $p = 0.289 > 0.05$). Thus, the two groups were undoubtedly not deviant in their oral proficiency.

Table 8. Independent samples test results of the pretest of English oral proficiency in experimental and control groups.

Class	N	M	Sd.	t	P
Experimental	50	63.7	18.573	- 1.065	0.29
Control	50	65.9	14.138		

As discussed in the learning motivation, the speaking performance of the Control Group indicated insignificant progress; instead, the communicative performance of the Experiment Group showed the improved learning achievement in language communication. Also based on Table 4.9, the posttest mean score of the Experimental Group is 78.7 with the standard deviation of 13.36, while the posttest mean score of the control group is 58.3 with the standard deviation of 16.96. After running the independent *t*-test through SPSS, the inter-group analysis of the posttest scores indicated that the experimental group scored significantly higher and improved better than the control group ($t = 7.54$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$). Obviously, it indicated the posttest scores of the two groups had a significant difference and that the Experimental Group performs significantly better than the Control Group. Therefore, it proved that the effects of PCBL on the experimental group were greater than the effects of TTCL on the control group in terms of enhancing HTU Students' English oral communication proficiency.

Table 9. Independent samples test results of the comparison of students' posttest of academic performance on english speaking in the experimental and control groups after the experiment.

Class	N	M	Sd.	t	p
Experimental	50	78.7	13.359	7.544	0.00
Control	50	58.3	16.963		

Conclusion and discussion

Unlike the traditional learning group, the PCBL group benefited tremendously from their learning performance on communicative English and obtained positive motivation toward MICE English learning through student-centered instruction. Thereby, the findings confirmed that PCBL could promote Hospitality and Tourism University students' oral communication proficiency in the field of MICE and learning motivation via harmonious, interactive, and cooperative environment. Moreover, discipline can greatly limit chatting in class and can well reduce uncooperative phenomenon during the teaching process. As for teachers, they act no more as the soloists but as facilitators and observers in the process of the PCBL. Therefore, teachers can find out students' learning difficulties and give immediate help while walking around the classroom during the group-work session on MICE. As a result, teachers could develop tasks relating to students' personal concern. Due to sufficient time interacting with students, the tacit understanding between teachers and students is generated. From such PCBL environment, students can understand that the mutual interests can be triggered through cooperation not

competition, so that they are apt to share resources with others and to accept others' assistance, as in the virtual situation of MICE. Besides, students tend to have affirmative emotions due to the harmonious environment and possibly intend to apply their positive social skills obtained in the PCBL classrooms on their MICE workplace. In the long term, the features of tendency to help others and the efficient communication skills could provide critical factors to students' success in their future career relevant to the business circle of MICE.

Implications, limitations and future research

Pedagogical implications for practice

The findings of this study might provide English teachers in Asia-Pacific countries with the big picture of how learners benefit from and value Cooperative Learning, and thus inspiring teachers to incorporate Cooperative Learning activities in their own teaching of MICE ESP classes. Particularly in most big-sized classes with achievers of various levels, the PCBL instruction will be a useful tool for EFL teachers to meet individuals' needs and improve students' achievements of English

speaking. In the present study, the fact that the experimental students achieved significantly in their oral communication ability could awake teachers that students with various levels could cooperate among themselves to make progress together in the peer collaboration-based learning. Besides, the findings in the present study led us to believe that the participants had the abilities to correct their misinterpretation or errors in the group work. In the peer collaboration-based learning, the role of a teacher should be the backstage helper who believed students could revise their errors after some discussion. When a teacher noticed students' errors, such as misinterpreting a word, it would be important for the teacher to hold the impulse of correcting those errors directly and providing the right answer right immediately, because students might be using meta-cognition to redress their errors, instead of being pointed out by the teacher. If the teacher directly rectified students' errors and provided help, it might deprive students of the opportunities to apply what they had learned to correct their errors.

Moreover, this study aimed to investigate Hospitality and Tourism University students' perceptions of PCBL a Cooperative Learning in their English class. Based on the findings, they showed that PCBL is actually an effective means of improving the students' language performance on English speaking as well as solving instructional problems occurring in Hospitality and Tourism University EFL classrooms. It is suggested that teachers provide students with more opportunities via such a Cooperative Learning environment so as to improve their English oral abilities to a greater extent and enhance their motivation towards learning to speak English. Therefore, PCBL is regarded to be effective for English teachers to promote the students' English oral communication proficiency, motivation, learning attitudes, social skills, and reduce the students' anxiety in learning English.

Furthermore, suitable Cooperative Learning methods should be adopted for students' individual differences. Structured and de-signed well, PCBL can benefit both high-and low-achievers. It is impossible to adopt a certain method to solve all the problems occurred in the EFL classroom settings, oriented to be MICE workplaces and suitable for every student. Thus, it is recommended for teachers to adjust the teaching procedures to the particular contexts that relevant to MICE. With careful and thorough planning and preparation, PCBL could be effective in Hospitality and Tourism University EFL classrooms.

Also, students' differences should be taken into consideration when assigning them into small groups. It would be appropriate to group the students according to their motivation, personality, English proficiency levels, gender, learning styles, or learning speed. Students should not be divided into different levels of single-ability class. Instead, what education should do is not to separate students, but to teach them to cooperate in the

classroom. Teachers can emulate each other's English teaching, and share teaching experiences and classroom activities with one another via conference participation, workshops and in-service seminar, peer observation, project work, and action research. According Wong (2012), during this 21st century, teachers should set their long-term teaching goal and expand their responsibilities over time to help students develop critical thinking, leading potential, as well as problem-solving abilities through collaboration across networks of relationship and influence on others.

Moreover, teachers are able to develop their own teaching strategies on the basis of various levels of EFL students. Furthermore, the survey of students' perceptions of and attitudes toward Peer Collaboration-Based Learning activities may serve as references for future teachers to integrate collaborative learning with their current instruction in EFL classes. Furthermore, this study is significant in that it can serve as a reference for MICE English teaching and learning, offering meaningful and useful information for instructors of MICE English and thereby helping learners acquire more productive language skills, especially speaking. According to the findings of the study, students can learn English for specific purposes through PCBL. By designing practical and interesting MICE curriculum via PCBL can enrich subjects' learning and arouse their interest in learning English. Based on PCBL, plotting a variety of topics related to the themes of current MICE industry is important to student's school learning and career, because industry knowledge can be acquired actively while the language is being used. Courses put emphasis on professional oral English ability used in the specific industry will enhance their English speaking competency and make students' English communication ability meet the practical industrial needs at the same time. Making English oral language as the core of the course and keeping the oral language learning to be in line with the global MICE development can help foster HTU students' English oral communication ability in terms of making an English presentation or hosting an English meeting.

Accordingly, the content-area teaching can be promoted, especially, in the teaching of English for specific purposes (ESP). MICE English instruction through PCBL helps students learn how to use specific terminology in different settings. By doing so, students can acquire the MICE knowledge capacity, perform the task in English for specific purposes, and improve language skills better later on. What is more, curriculum integrates current local MICE events with English teaching will help students care their community environment, economic development etc., so students will benefit from their learning. Students in such a setting can be easily motivated by the various topics relevant to their real life. Through MICE courses based on PCBL, EFL students can not only cultivate their English skills but

also extend their knowledge to the world. However, the development and related resources of MICE industry in southern Taiwan is less than Taipei city. After the operation of Taiwan High Speed Rail, local governments in southern Taiwan can enlarge the cooperation to each other by constructing a common MICE direction to share the resources and provide complementary assistance. Kaohsiung City with convenient land, shipping, and air transportation advantages may serve as a platform to promote the development of MICE industry in southern Taiwan. In addition to the improvement of infrastructure, cultivating talent for MICE industry is critical to future success. In response to the future of globalization and future trends in MICE industry, the local governments should cooperate with Hospitality and Tourism Universities to prepare students for meeting the industry need. In conclusion, only the MICE English teaching of language skills implemented through PCBL can Hospitality and Tourism universities in southern Taiwan undoubtedly enhance their students' English oral communication proficiency.

Limitations and implications for future research

The participants of the present study were college students. To maintain the original nature of the class and to avoid affecting their normal school time and teaching environment, a quasi-experimental design was used in the study. The limitation of this study is the limited number of samples of 100 students in two classes from the same grade in the same college. Thus, the results might not prove generalized to that of a larger scale of college students. Also, due to the constraint of time and resource, no proficiency test at the end of the semester was employed to examine whether students' language abilities were enhanced through this PCBL.

One limitation in this study was the small sample size of two classes belonging to the same college, limiting the generalization of the results. Thus, future researchers may implement PCBL on more classes to become more general. Another limitation concerned was the short experimental period which impeded the exploration of the long-term effectiveness of the PCBL on the college students' competence in EFL. Future researchers may be interested in exploring the effectiveness of PCBL in EFL classrooms for at least one semester or six months to analyze whether the students' achievement or motivation toward English learning is affected. Another limitation was the fact that no assessment tests were made to find out the effects of PCBL on the oral, listening, reading and advanced writing abilities in this study. Thus, the language skills could be included in future PCBL studies.

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