PERCEPTIONS OF PAKISTANI BS ENGLISH STUDENTS AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS TOWARDS WEB-BASED COLLABORATIVE LEARNING APPROACH FOR LEARNING SPEAKING SKILLS

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ABSTRACT

The present study aims to investigate "Perceptions of Pakistani BS-English students and English Language Teachers towards a Web-based Collaborative Learning Approach (CLI) for Learning Speaking Skills." The objective of the present study is to seek students' as well as teachers' perceptions of collaborative learning approach for improving speaking skills. This research followed a mixed-methods approach. To realize the objective of the study, the researcher managed two research instruments: one is a questionnaire for the students, and the other is a semi-structured interview with English language instructors. The students of BS English (n = 232) and English language teachers (n = 12) belonging to 5 public-sector colleges in Lahore formed the samples of the study. The expected discoveries from this exploration give proof that web-based collaborative learning is a compelling system for enhancing learners' motivation, interest, confidence, autonomy, and attention level in a classroom interactional environment. The predictable conclusion drawn from this investigation is that utilizing collaborative learning helps BS-English students build up their self-confidence. At last, this examination has pragmatic implications for educators for adequately actualizing this method and others for students that may help them enhance their speaking skills through collaborative learning approach.

	Collaborative learning, Web-based collaborative learning, speaking skills, EFL
KEYWORDS	
	Learners

Introduction

The use of the internet and the web is expanding twice as quickly as it did in the past. The use of web-based learning in education has also risen significantly. These days, a huge number of educational establishments provide online courses. Globally, there are now more virtual institutions than ever before. Moreover, web-based learning has become more popular due to computer-mediated communication systems (Kim & Kang 2020). Instead of just using web

pages for posting materials or emails for student-instructor messages, web-based communication systems are specifically designed to use the web to support novices, instructors, and experts in communicating and collaborating with each other in the learning process (Ali, 2023).

Presently, there are numerous web-based applications like Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, Padlet, Teams, Zoom, Google Meet, the Learning Management System, computer conferencing, Meta AI, etc. for learning. The students' use of these web-based tools for learning together is termed as web-based collaborative learning (Ali & Yasmin, 2016). This mode of learning ensures many-to-many communication with both time and place independence. Davies (1995) argues that the scholars should emphasize time and place independence because they generate distance learning opportunities to move from individual modes of delivery to group-oriented interactive modes.

Web-based collaborative learning has become a popular learning approach along with the development of web-based environments. Web-based collaborative learning can be effectively used to facilitate students' learning performance and enhance their competence in creativity. Lifelong learning, distance learning, and informal learning are the main three areas to utilize a web-based collaborative learning approach. Even in the classroom-based environment, web-based collaborative learning can be integrated with the regular classroom-based learning process. According to the NSBA (2007) survey, 96% of the novices reported using social networking technologies, and on average, they spend 9 hours per week chatting, blogging, and visiting online communities.

Speaking, one of the integrated skills, is a pre-requisite of language learning. In other words, speaking is a fundamental skill in language learning, and it's often considered the ultimate indicator of language proficiency. According to Jaya, Petru, and Pitaloka (2022), speaking skill is considered the yardstick to measure whether someone has learned a language or not. It is also a fact that speaking has been a big problem for most of the L2 learners because English is not their first language. During speaking, EFL/ESL learners face psychological problems such as nervousness, anxiety, lack of vocabulary, word choice, and fear of committing errors (Jaya et al., 2022).

Speaking is one of the four language skills that a student needs to master and, according to Jaya, Petrus, and Pitaloka (2022), the most preferred language skill to use to see whether someone has learned a language or not. Speaking might be a big problem for many students, especially when it comes to ESL and EFL, as it is not their first language. Jaya et al. (2022) state that the problems when speaking in ESL or EFL are often psychological problems like anxiety, nervousness, and fear of making mistakes. They contend that speaking plays a crucial part in the acquisition of a second or foreign language because it helps pupils develop their personalities, characteristics, and social skills. Since English is a widely spoken language and most people need to speak it in order to be understood, speaking the language can be considered the most significant aspect of learning it.

Considering the importance of the skill under discussion, BS English students studying in public-sector colleges are required to be proficient in it. Their proficiency is gauged through their presentations, which are a graded component of their educational program. Presentations are not only mandatory in general English courses but also in English literature courses. Besides, some

components of speaking skills like asking questions, vocabulary words, how to give presentations, etc. have also been added to the course contents. For teaching speaking skills in the in the English language, teachers and students resort to technological tools like WhatsApp, Meta AI, Zoom, YouTube, etc. (Ali et al.,2020).

The past related literature revealed that Babikar (2018) investigated collaborative learning approaches in class, Khan et al. (2023) evaluated the role of collaborative learning in classroom settings, Katiangagho & Listyani (2019) viewed collaborative learning through games, and Khan et al. (2013) investigated the improvement of speaking skills through collaboration on YouTube, vlogs, lectures, and tutorials. Niaz and Somro (2023) investigated the impression of development in speaking abilities through e-learning. Aiziz et al. (2023) and Butarbutar et al. (2023) investigated the perception of teamwork in online learning. Furthermore, these research studies were done on a variety of groups and in different educational environments. The current study is unique and relevant since it tries to discover the perspectives of Pakistani BS English students and English language professors from public sector institutions in Lahore, Pakistan, discusses a web-based collaborative learning strategy for teaching speaking abilities.

Research Questions

1. What is the perception of BS English students regarding web-based collaborative learning approach for learning speaking skills?

2. What is perception of English language teachers regarding web-based collaborative learning approach for teaching speaking skills?

Significance of the Study

The study is considered extremely important since it may shed light on important issues related to technology-enhanced language learning in Pakistan. The study's conclusions provide English language instructors with information regarding how well Pakistani undergraduates' speaking abilities can be improved through web-based collaborative learning approaches. The study's findings also influence legislators and curriculum designers to include technology in English language programs. The study will also draw attention to the advantages and disadvantages of developing a web-based collaborative learning environment in Pakistani classrooms. The study's conclusions lay the groundwork for further investigations into how technology can improve language acquisition and speaking abilities in comparable settings.

Literature Review

Collaboration and collaborative learning

As Van Boxtel, et al. (2000) explain, collaborative learning activities allow students to provide explanations of their understanding, which can help students elaborate and reorganize their knowledge. Social interaction stimulates elaboration of conceptual knowledge as group mates attempt to make themselves understood, and research demonstrates that providing elaborated explanations improves student comprehension of concepts. Once conceptual understandings are made visible through verbal exchange, students can negotiate meaning to arrive at convergence, or shared understanding (Ali et al., 2023)

Since the late 1990s, a new strand of research on collaborative learning focusing on new technologies for mediating, observing, and recording interactions during collaboration has emerged (Kramarski & Mevarech,2003). This new strand of research, commonly called computer-collaboration.   supported collaborative learning (CSCL), typically uses online networks for facilitating and recording online interactions among two or more individuals who may be geographically and/or temporally dispersed. Much of this research has grown in parallel to new technologies for supporting distance interactions, such as email, chat, instant messaging capability and more recently, resources for synchronous video conferencing (such as Skype).

Essential components of collaborative learning:

The collaboration must be implemented correctly. This goes back to the idea that the teacher has a pivotal role in group work even if they are not directly lecturing. (University of Minnesota's College of Education and Human Development, 2013) Johnson and Johnson conclude that there are five key components to successful collaboration in the classroom:

- Positive interdependence (each individual depends on and is accountable to the others—a built-in incentive to help, accept help, and root for others)- Individual accountability (each person in the group learns the material)
- Promotive interaction (group members help one another, share information, offer clarifying explanations)
- Social skills (leadership, communication)
- Group processing (assessing how effectively they are working with one another)

    (University of Minnesota's College of Education and Human Development, 2013)

These five tenets for successful collaboration seem reasonable, but the question is how they are implemented in the classroom. It is hard to imagine that these key components occur naturally, or that all students have a suitable understanding of these requirements. The teacher must be the integrator of the five key components to successful group work and they must be able to teach collaboration just like any other subject.

Classroom collaborative learning:

Teachers must assume the leadership role of group work in the classroom and ensure that the purpose and process of collaboration are clearly defined. Most literature on the subject supports the idea that the teacher should design the student groups, as students may not have learning and effective team building at the heart of their group membership decisions. For many students, collaboration is simply a collection of individuals discussing a topic as they complete their work, or perhaps a dominant member that does all the work as the rest of the group practices social loafing. (University of North Texas, 2008)

There are several different types of groups that can be established in the classroom. Some teachers will establish enduring groups for a semester that will have one or several assignments to complete together. Other teachers will establish ad hoc groups that will form to execute an in-class task or assignment and the group dissolves afterward.

Whatever the purpose of the group will be, it is important to analyze the character traits, personalities, aptitude and other characteristics of students in the classroom. This is certainly a difficult task, but attempting to influence the group dynamics within a classroom can lead to an optimal collaborative learning environment. Having some background or training in group dynamics could ease the burden on teachers as they attempt to optimize collaboration in their classrooms. (Bennis and Herbert ,2009)

Web-Based Collaborative learning Diagram:

Web-based collaborative learning diagram can be drawn as figure 1. There are also five components in web-based collaborative learning environment like classroom-based environment, which they are peer, learning group, tutor, communication, and web-based learning environment. But there are some clearly differentiations between these two learning environments.

Figure 1

Web-Based Collaborative Learning

_____Direct connection

…………………………Indirect connection
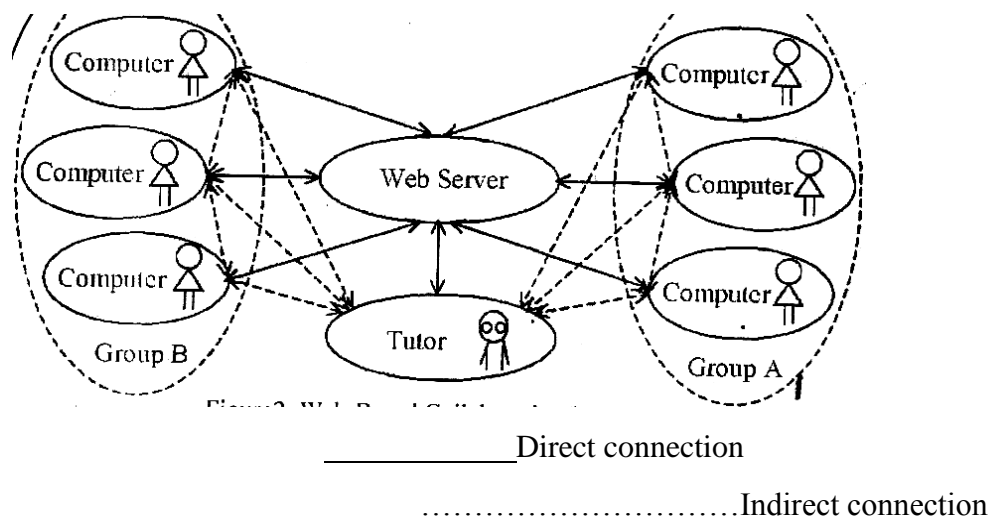
Source: Zhao & Kanji (2001, 4)

Web-based collaborative learning has several tools e.g. twitter, Facebook, wikis, etc. This study is concerned with WhatsApp, zoom, Meta AI and YouTube how they can be used in education particularly in collaborative learning.

Related Studies

Babiker (2018) aimed to improve speaking abilities through collaborative learning. The researcher developed the study's hypotheses and research questions early in the inquiry. Data were gathered using a questionnaire and a checklist. The study used an analytical-descriptive technique. The data analysis revealed that EL teachers were unfamiliar with collaborative learning strategies. The pupils did not take group work seriously, yet these tactics resulted in considerable improvements in speaking abilities.

Khan et al. (2023) carried out perception-based research in Pakistan. The researchers wanted to create a questionnaire for collaborative learning. They followed a procedure before designing a questionnaire: they reviewed related literature, identified several instruments for collaborative learning in distinct circumstances, and chose appropriate constructs for them. The items were tailored to the study's objectives and the Pakistani L2 learning setting. The questionnaire was evaluated by three ESL professionals and sent to 60 ESL undergraduate students. Cronbach's alpha was used to assess internal consistency. The four surveys had Cronbach Alpha reliability ratings ranging from good to outstanding.

Katiandagho and Listyani's (2019) study sought to assess both the perception of collaborative learning and the efficacy of collaborative learning using games in developing the speaking abilities of 10th grade Indonesian students. The study used a descriptive design. The study's sample consisted of 20 10th-grade students from a private senior high school. The students (20) completed a questionnaire, and four novices were interviewed using a semi-structured interview instrument. The data was examined using thematic analysis. The research showed that students rated collaborative learning activities positively.

Khan et al. (2023) evaluated L2 learners' attitudes toward the usage of YouTube lectures, vlogs, and tutorials. The research was a cross-sectional survey. Data were collected using both quantitative and qualitative approaches. A closed-ended questionnaire was used to collect data from 100 ESL learners at the Virtual University of Lahore. The research showed that L2 learners had a favorable propensity to use YouTube lectures, vlogs, and tutorials to increase their speaking abilities.

Niaz and Soomro (2023) did an important study during COVID-19. The research sought to elicit impressions of e-learning technologies used by Pakistani English language students. The study used a mixed-methods approach with a convergent sequential technique. The data collection techniques comprised a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The data from questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistics, whilst the data from semi-structured interviews were examined using theme analysis. The findings indicated that novices had a perspective of e-learning instruments, as the majority of learners stated that they considered this way of learning impactful. Furthermore, they claimed that such tools were really useful and simple to use. They also disclosed that mobile phones and zoom applications turned out to be the most often utilized instruments, followed by the utilization of WhatsApp during pandemic in the country.

Aziz et al. (2023) ascertained the perceptions of novices and instructors about online English language teaching and learning in Pakistan. The researchers used the qualitative descriptive method to gather data from the participants in the study. The researchers administered a closed-ended questionnaire to the students and conducted semi-structured interviews with instructors. The data was validated through a pilot study. For the reliability of the data, close-ended responses were tested using the Cronbach alpha test. The value for this study's closed-ended tool is 0.7. The analyzed data suggested that virtual English language teaching is more fruitful for instructors and learners as it is accessible and time-saving. It enhances their awareness of new technology and its applications. However, they identified some challenges

attached to it, i.e., power breakdown, lack of resources, poor network connection, and lack of professional and academic training.

Butarbutar et al. (2023) conducted another perception-based investigation on online collaborative learning (OCL) in an Indonesian rural context. The research study used a qualitative report by employing a triple-case study approach. According to the study's findings, synchronous and asynchronous learning modes can be used to incorporate online classroom learning (OCL) into EFL-speaking courses. OCL is viewed favorably by students and teachers alike. Teachers find it to be efficient, effective, and engaging. Implementing OCL can be hampered by a bad internet connection, tardiness, and a lack of technological experience. The university-sponsored internet, orientation, group formation, additional tutoring, and self-directed learning are some strategies to get past these.

Conclusively, the literature reviewed so far reflected that Babikar (2018) investigated collaborative learning approaches in class, Khan et al. (2013) assessed the role of collaborative learning in classroom settings, Katiangagho & Listyani (2019) viewed collaborative learning through games, and Khan et al. (2013) investigated the improvement of speaking skills through collaboration on YouTube, vlogs, lectures, and tutorials. Niaz & Somro (2023) researched the perception of improvement in speaking skills via e-learning. Aiziz et al. (2023) and Butarbutar et al. (2023) conducted their research on the perception of collaboration through online learning. Moreover, these studies have been conducted on diverse populations and in different educational contexts. The present study is unique and pertinent in the sense that it aims to ascertain the perceptions of Pakistani BS English students and English language teachers belonging to public sector colleges in Lahore, Pakistan, regarding a web-based collaborative learning approach for learning speaking skills.

Research Methods

Creswell (2009) defines a research design as "the plan or proposal to conduct research" (p. 5). Researchers have several alternatives for study design, including qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods. However, the choice of any of them is determined by the nature of the study challenge and the sort of data being gathered (Ali et al.,2022). This study used a mixed-methods approach with a descriptive research design, assuming that L2 learners and English language teachers are more aware of web-based collaborative learning for speaking skills and can offer a comprehensive picture. Data from English language learners in the form of a quantitative survey questionnaire may be better checked and triangulated for deep knowledge when compared to data from English language teachers collected through qualitative, semi-structured interviews. Maxwell (2016) asserts that the use of mixed-method design provides a logical foundation, methodological practicability, and comprehensive comprehension of the intended phenomena.

Research Samples

The number of (232) BS English students studying in different semesters in 5 public sector colleges in Lahore, Pakistan, affiliated with the University of Punjab, took part in the study as samples. A convenient sampling technique was used to select the samples for the study. The reasons for selecting the participants from these colleges were that the colleges had highly qualified faculty, and most of the teachers were using web-based collaborative learning

approaches in their classrooms. The researchers themselves belong to these institutions and were aware of this practicum. Another sample of the study was English language teachers, who were 15 in number, and they were selected through the purposive sampling technique. Those teachers were made part of the study who had a minimum M.Phil. qualification and had a minimum 5 years' experience teaching speaking skills and actively using web-based tools like WhatsApp, YouTube, Zoom, etc.

Data Collection Instruments

To realize the objectives of the study, the researchers used two research instruments: a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. A survey questionnaire (Appendix A) on the Likert scale, having 17 constructs, was adapted, modified, and contextualized from the previous literature (Aziz et al., 2023; Niazi & Somro, 2023; Katiandagho & Listyani, 2019). The instrument was also validated by three EFL experts. The changes suggested by them were incorporated prior to its administration. The second instrument, semi-structured interviews (Appendix B), was also adopted by the researchers. The questions for the semi-structured interviews were carefully formed, keeping in mind the past studies and the nature of the study.

Procedure

In order to realize the objectives of the study, two research instruments, i.e., a questionnaire and semi-structured interview questions, were utilized for data collection. The researchers administered the questionnaire by sharing the link to it on WhatsApp groups of the students. The students filled out the questionnaire and submitted their responses. The quantitative data gleaned in this way were analyzed descriptively through SPSS. Subsequently, the researchers visited the research sites and conducted interviews with the teachers. The interviews were recorded with the help of cell phones and later transcribed for the purpose of data analysis. The data from the interviews were analyzed qualitatively.

Results and Analysis

The data obtained from the survey questionnaire and semi-structured interviews were analyzed quantitatively as well as qualitatively.

The quantitative data gleaned from the survey questionnaire has been analyzed in three sub-sections: (1) biographic information; (2) reliability and validity; and (3) frequency of constructs.

Biographic Information

The biographic information of the samples of the study is as under:

Table 1

Sample Size Distribution Gender and Institute-Wise

Type of Institute * Gender Crosstabulation Count

		Gender		
		Male	Female	Total
type of Institute	Govt. Graduate College of Science Wahadat Road Lahore.	10	5	15
	Govt. MAO Graduate College Lahore.	25	39	64
	Govt. Islamia Graduate College Civil Lines Lahore.	56	2	58
	Govt. Graduate College Township Lahore.	23	21	44
	Govt. Shalimar Graduate College Baghbanpura Lahore.	19	32	51
Total		133	99	232

Table 1 reflects that the total sample size turned out to be 232. There were 133 male students and 99 female students of BS-English from Five largest graduate colleges of Lahore, Pakistan.

Table 2

Gender and Semester

Semester * Gender Crosstabulation

Count

		Gender		
		Male	Female	Total
Semester	First	1	0	1
	Second	46	26	72
	Third	10	4	14
	Fourth	19	16	35
	Sixth	12	15	27

	Seventh	16	5	21
	Eigth	29	33	62
Total		133	99	232

Table 2 shows the gender and semester strength of the samples size. The number of 72 students from semester II and 62 from semester VIII filled in the questionnaire. The number of respondents from Fourth and Sixth semester is also noteworthy and that is 35 and 27 respectively. The table reflects that students from even semesters mostly participated in the study because classes of even semesters were going on at the time of data collection.

Figure 2

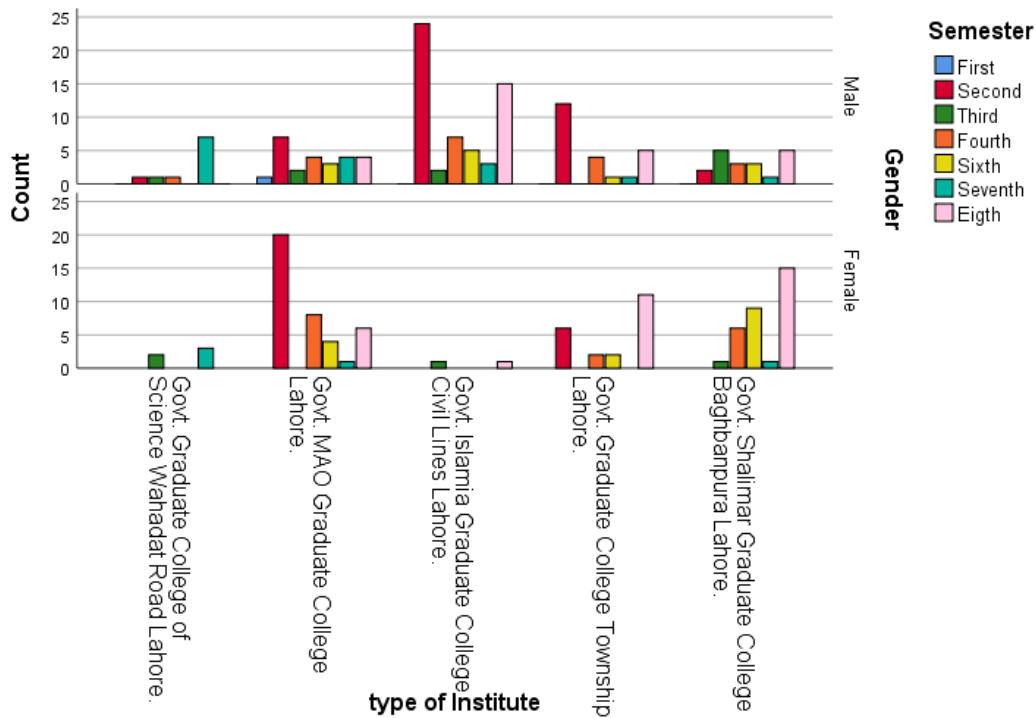*Gender-semester and Type of Institute*

Figure 2 displays the three-way chart of Gender-Semester vs Institute. It is observed that male and female students of semesters One to Eight of all five institute positively contributed their responses.

Table 3

Participants' Age

Age of Student

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	17.00	4	1.7	1.7	1.7
	18.00	16	6.9	6.9	8.6
	19.00	39	16.8	16.8	25.4
	20.00	41	17.7	17.7	43.1
	21.00	44	19.0	19.0	62.1
	22.00	40	17.2	17.2	79.3
	23.00	33	14.2	14.2	93.5
	24.00	8	3.4	3.4	97.0
	25.00	4	1.7	1.7	98.7
	26.00	1	.4	.4	99.1
	27.00	2	.9	.9	100.0
	Total	232	100.0	100.0	

Table 3 shows that the majority of students (62.1%) are between 21 and 23 years old, with the most common age group being 21 years old (19% of the total). The age range of 20-24 years old accounts for 79.3% of the total students, while the age range of 17-19 years old accounts for 25.4% of the total students. Notably, only 2.9% of students fall within the age range of 25-27 years old.

Figure 3

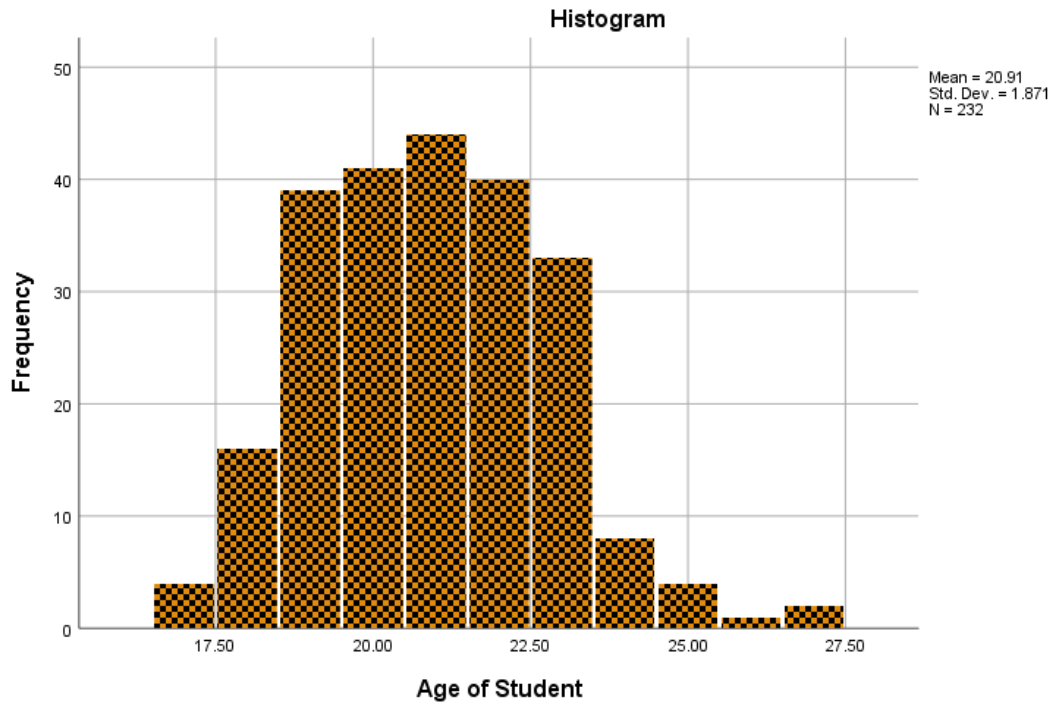*Histogram of Age Distribution of Samples*

Figure 3 represents the histogram of the age distribution of the respondents. The minimum age was 17 years where as maximum age reported was 27 years.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability Analysis

Table 3

Cronbach's Alpha

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.871	.877	17

Table 3 reflects the value of Cronbach's Alpha i.e. .871 which is above the acceptable standard range of 0.70 to 0.90. So, the constructed scale is reliable.

Frequency of Constructs

One Sample T- Test

To investigate the perception of BS-English Students regarding web-based collaborative learning approach for learning speaking skills we have setup questionnaire based upon 17 closed ended 5 item Likert scale (1 to 5) with value "3" as Neutral point and "5" being strongly agree. We setup following hypothesis

$H_0: \mu = 3$ (*Neutral Point*), *The mean of intensity of agreement or disagreement is* 3. Against the alternative one tailed.

$H_{A_1}: \mu > 3$ (*the mean value in toward agreement*) , Right tailed Test or

$H_{A_2}: \mu < 3$ (*the mean value in toward disagreement*), Left Tailed Test

The results are reported in the Table 4 below. The calculated t-value and corresponding p-value (two tailed p-value will be divided by 2 to get one tailed p-value). If the mean difference reported in the last column is positive the alternative hypothesis would be H_{A_1}, if null hypothesis is rejected it would indicate that average intensity is greater than 3, hence inclination of the respondents is towards the agreement about particular statement. Similarly of mean difference is negative the alternative hypothesis will be H_{A_2} left tailed test and if null hypothesis is rejected it means the average intensity falls towards disagreement. The null hypothesis if p-valve is lees than ($\frac{\alpha}{2} = \frac{0.05}{2} = 0.025$).

Table 4

Frequency of Students' Responses

Items	Test Value = 3			
	T	**Df**	**P-Value Sig. (2-tailed)**	**Mean Difference**
I am aware of the term collaborative learning (CL).	13.887	231	0.000	0.81897
I am also aware of the term web-based collaborative learning approach (CLI).	9.901	231	0.000	0.62069
I prefer learning speaking skills through web-based collaborative learning.	13.663	231	0.000	0.77155
Learning speaking skills through web-based CLI enhances my interest.	13.087	231	0.000	0.74569
Learning speaking skills through Web-based CLI is increases my motivation level.	11.677	231	0.000	0.66810
Learning speaking skills through web-based	9.259	231	0.000	0.55603

CLI increases my attention level.				
Learning speaking skills through web-based CLI makes me an autonomous leaner.	9.638	231	0.000	0.58621
Learning speaking skills through web-based CLI makes me confident	10.366	231	0.000	0.66379
Learning Speaking skills through web-based CLI helps me in construction of knowledge	14.733	231	0.000	0.82759
Learning speaking skills through web-based CLI gives me more chances to ask/respond to questions of my class fellows and teachers.	11.557	231	0.000	0.73276
Learning speaking skills through web-based CLI reduces my anxiety.	8.827	231	0.000	0.55172
Web-based CLI is a better way of learning speaking skills than the learning in traditional classroom.	5.811	231	0.000	0.40948
Web-based CLI improves my speaking skills more than that of traditional classroom,	5.558	231	0.000	0.38793
Web-based CLI is mere a wastage of time.	-4.859	231	0.000	**-0.34914**
Web-based CLI has connectivity issues.	3.724	231	0.000	**0.25000**
Web-based CLI causes pre-lesson heavy workload.	-0.895	230	0.372	**-0.05628**
Web-based CLI causes post-lesson workload.	0.210	231	0.834	0.01293

According to Table 4 most of the statements have a mean difference greater than 3, indicating agreement towards web-based CLI (e.g., awareness, preference, enhanced interest, motivation, attention, autonomy, confidence, knowledge construction, and improved speaking skills). However, a few statements have a mean difference less than 3, indicating disagreement (e.g., wastage of time, connectivity issues, and heavy workload). The p-values are all less than 0.025 (α /2), indicating significant results.

The data gathered in the result of semi-structured interviews of English language teachers for the purpose of ascertaining their perception of web-based collaborative learning approaches for learning speaking skills have been analyzed below in two sections i.e. demographic information and analysis of responses. The demographic details of the teacher respondents are as under:

Table 5

Demographic Information: Teacher Respondents

Teacher Respondent (M/F)	Designation	Qualification	Experience	Institute
TR1 (M)	Assistant Professor	M.Phil. English	15 Years	Govt. Graduate College of Science, Wahdat Road Lahore
TR2 (M)	Lecturer	MS Linguistics	10 Years	As Above
TR3 (M)	Assistant Professor	PhD English	18 years	As Above
TR4 (M)	Associate Professor	PhD Scholar	22 Years	Govt. Shalimar Graduate College, Lahore
TR5 (M)	Assistant Professor	M.Phil.	16 years	As Above
TR6 (F)	Lecturer	M.Phil.	11 years	As Above
TR7 (M)	Assistant Professor	PhD Linguistics	21 Years	Govt. Graduate Islamia College Civil Lines Lahore
TR8 (M)	Associate Professor	PhD English	22 years	As Above
TR9 (M)	Associate Professor	M.Phil. Linguistics	22 Years	Govt. MAO Graduate College, Lahore
TR10 (F)	Lecturer	M.Phil. TESL	12 years	As Above
TR11 (F)	Professor	PhD English	27 years	Govt. Graduate College Township Lahore
TR12 (M)	Assistant Professor	PhD	18 years	As Above

Table 4 reflects the demographic details of the teacher respondents. The majority of the teachers interviewed were males (09). However, 33 female teacher respondents also participated in the research study. The teacher participants belonged to various designations. Lecturers (3), Assistant Professors (5), Associate Professors (3), and Professor (1) took part in the study. The table demonstrates that all of the teacher respondents had at least M.Phil. level education. Out of 12 teacher respondents, seven were M.Phils., while the rest of them (5) were PhDs. The teacher

respondents had 10–27 years of experience. They belonged to five public sector graduate colleges in Lahore, which is the capital city of Punjab Province.

The identification of themes in text involves keyword analysis, comparison, contrast, and word/phrase analysis. It involves searching for missing information, examining linguistic elements, and selecting keywords. Teachers debate and agree on principles, which are then used as themes and sub-themes. The data from the semi-structured interviews was analyzed through a content analysis approach. The key themes and sub-themes that emerged from the data are as follows:

- The importance of speaking skills for BS English students

- The role of collaborative learning in improving speaking skills

- The role of web-based collaborative learning in improving speaking skills

- Problems in web-based collaborative learning

- Use of web-based applications

The majority of the teacher respondents in semi-structured interviews emphasized the importance of speaking skills for BS English students. They shared that speaking ability has a very crucial role in students' academics, assessment, professional, and day-to-day communication. Some of the comments from the TRs are as follows:

Speaking good and effective English may pave the way for the successful completion of their degree (TR2).

Speaking skills are important to boost their confidence in society as BS English students (TR6).

BS classes involve class participation, discussion, and presentations, and strong spoken English allows students to express their ideas clearly, ask questions confidently, help them understand the material better, and show strong performance in their coursework (TR9).

It can help them defend their thesis during the viva. Later on, it would help them clear job interviews. (TR12)

In this way, the data claimed that proficiency in English speaking is highly significant for novices doing BS English, as it helps them get good grades, give effective presentations, pass viva voce exams, and communicate in society.

Most of the teacher respondents expressed their views regarding collaborative learning for improving speaking skills. The majority of them asserted that the speaking skills of the learners can be improved through collaborative learning approaches.

It will help enhance English through increased interaction, real-life communication, peer feedback, motivation, and engagement (TR4).

Yes, through collaborative learning, we can improve the speaking skills of BS English students by having sessions of class discussions on different topics in which every student should participate and give their views about the given topic (TR6).

In this way, the hesitation and shyness of students to speak may be minimized (TR8).

By working together on discussions, presentations, or role-playing activities, students get regular speaking practice, receive peer feedback to improve fluency and clarity, and gain confidence through shared learning experiences (TR12).

Hence, the data claimed that the English-speaking skills of L2 learners can be improved through a collaborative learning approach.

Similarly, English language teachers highlighted the positive use of web-based collaborative learning in their interviews. According to most of the teachers, web-based collaborative learning works wonders at improving the skills of BS English novices.

These platforms allow for real-time discussions on WhatsApp and Zoom, which enable instant communication for online classes, group discussions, brainstorming sessions, or practicing presentations (TR1).

Moreover, YouTube channels can be used to share pre-recorded lectures, analyses of literary works, or creative writing pieces, sparking discussions and feedback in the classroom (TR6).

In Zoom meetings, for instance, if a teacher asks for their individual feedback, they can respond in the chat box, and the feedback can not only be received but also checked within a matter of a few minutes (TR9).

According to the data, web-based collaborative learning is facilitative for learning speaking skills for L2 learners.

Teacher respondents also talked about the problems confronted by teachers as well as students in implementing web-based collaborative learning approaches. According to them, the use of technology in third-world countries has never been easy. It has always been a challenging task.

A very reliable, uninterrupted, fast, and all-pervasive network facility is its basis (TR2).

Connectivity problems, software glitches, and other such technical problems can hinder students (TR5).

Apart from certain technological glitches, the problem can be that they are not encouraged enough by their instructor to collaborate (TR8).

Shy students may hesitate to participate actively in virtual environments (TR10).

It is time-consuming and enhances the workload of the teacher and students (TR 11).

In this way, the data claimed that web-based collaborative learning involves various problems like connectivity, resources, and time for L2 learning in speaking skills.

During semi-structured interviews, the teacher respondents were also asked about suggestions to improve speaking skills through web-based applications. They shared insightful ideas, which are as follows:

WhatsApp groups facilitate regular discussions, while YouTube channels can be created for sharing pre-recorded presentations or analyses (TR2).

Zoom allows for live workshops, presentations, and group debates, providing a platform for real-time practice and peer interaction (TR4).

They can be taught and guided well by IT instructors on how to better use these apps for collaborative learning. They should be given more collaborative tasks to improve their speaking skills (TR6).

WhatsApp and Zoom allow for an interactive experience, allowing for engagement with other users (TR9).

Hence, the data claimed that if web-based collaborative learning is implemented properly, the speaking skills of EFL learners can be improved to a greater extent.

Discussion

The aim of the current investigation was to ascertain the perceptions of Pakistani BS English students and English language teachers regarding improvement in speaking skills through web-based collaborative learning. The student respondents generally agree that web-based CLI is beneficial for learning speaking skills, as the majority of mean differences are positive and significant. However, some respondents express their concerns about connectivity issues, heavy workloads, and perceived wastage of time. The analysis of English language teachers' responses imparts similar findings. The findings of the present research study are consistent with the results of previous research (like Aiziz et al., 2023; Babikar, 2018; Butarbutar et al., 2023; Katiandagho & Listyani, 2019; Khan et al., 2013; Niaz & Somro, 2023), which report the beneficial uses of educational technology like web-based applications for improvement in speaking skills. The results of the current study also further the findings of the previous research, which found that technology, despite having a lot of benefits, has some restrictions like connectivity issues, a lack of resources, and wastage of time.

The significant p-values (all less than 0.025) indicate that the results are unlikely due to chance and, therefore, provide robust evidence to support the alternative hypotheses (H_A1 or H_A2) for most statements. These findings suggest that the respondents' perceptions are significantly inclined towards agreement or disagreement, depending on the statement. Moreover, teacher respondents also endorsed that web-application-based collaborative learning assists L2 learners in improving their speaking skills. It may be due to the fact that the new generation is quite good at using technology. Overall, this study contributes to the existing literature on web-based collaborative learning by providing empirical evidence on the perceptions of BS-English students and English language teachers regarding its effectiveness in

learning speaking skills. The findings have implications for administration, highlighting the need to address technical issues and workload concerns while harnessing the potential of web-based CLI to enhance language learning experiences.

Conclusion

The purpose of the present research was to find out the perceptions of Pakistani L2 learners and their English language teachers about web-based collaborative learning for the purpose of improving their English-speaking skills. In order to realize the intended aims of the study, the data were collected from BS English novices and English language teachers through a questionnaire and semi-structur interviews. The gathered data were analyzed quantitatively as well as qualitatively. As per the data, Pakistani L2 learners perceive web-based collaborative learning tools as highly fruitful, as they not only improve their speaking skills but also make them aware, motivated, attentive, autonomous, and confident. The analysis of the qualitative data from teacher respondents also held that Pakistani English language teachers thought that the speaking skills of the students might be improved through web-based platforms like WhatsApp, YouTube, Meta AI, and Zoom.

The findings of the study have academic and administrative ramifications. The study is equally beneficial for L2 learners and English language instructors. The study is insightful to the students as it makes them aware of the advantages of technology-enhanced learning. The study is beneficial for English language teachers too, as they can improve their andragogical skills. They can integrate web-based applications into their teaching and make their job easier. The study may have ramifications for the administration of educational institutions. They may work on the restrictions on technology. They should ensure speedy internet facilities and technological gadgets on the premises of their institutes for the students to get the maximum benefit from technology. The curriculum planners may also incorporate technology into the teaching-learning process. The study's conclusions may assist future researchers in replicating the study with larger sample sizes, a diverse population, and in different settings.

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Appendix A

Questionnaire

Section A

Demographic Information

Name: _____ (Optional)

Age: _____   Gender: _____

_____   ___

Subject: _____   Semester: _____

_____

Institute:

_____

Section B

	SDA	DA	N	A	SA
I am aware of the term collaborative learning (CL).					
I am also aware of the term web-based collaborative learning approach (CLI).					
I prefer learning speaking skills through web-based collaborative learning.					
Learning speaking skills through web-based CLI enhances my interest.					
Learning speaking skills through Web-based CLI is increases my motivation level.					
Learning speaking skills through web-based CLI increases my attention level.					
Learning speaking skills through web-based CLI makes me an autonomous leaner.					
Learning speaking skills through web-based CLI makes me confident					
Learning Speaking skills through web-based CLI helps me in construction of knowledge					
Learning speaking skills through web-based CLI gives me more chances to ask/respond to questions of my class fellows and teachers.					
Learning speaking skills through web-based CLI reduces my anxiety.					
Web-based CLI is a better way of learning speaking skills than the learning in traditional classroom.					

Web-based CLI improves my speaking skills more than that of traditional classroom,					
Web-based CLI is mere a wastage of time.					
Web-based CLI has connectivity issues.					
Web-based CLI causes pre-lesson heavy workload.					
Web-based CLI causes post-lesson workload.					

Appendix B

Semi-structured Interview Questions

1. What is the importance of speaking skills for BS English students?
2. Can speaking skills of BS English students be improved through collaborative learning? If yes/no, how?
3. Do you think that web-based collaborative learning is challenging for teachers
4. Can BS English students collaborate through web-based applications like WhatsApp, YouTube, Zoom, and Meta AI? If yes, what are the challenges faced by the teachers?
5. What can be the problems faced by the students for doing web-based collaborative learning for improving speaking skills?
6. How can BS English students use these applications for improvement in speaking skills?