

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### **A. Background of Study**

The cultivation of communication skills has emerged as an imperative facet of 21st-century education, as the conventional yardstick of academic achievement proves insufficient in an era where success inherently intertwined with competitive prowess (Angganing, 2022). Paradoxically, prevailing educational methodologies may inadvertently hinder students' capacity to navigate evolving landscapes, fostering self-sufficiency but potentially impeding adaptability and collaboration, two hallmarks of contemporary professional environments. A disjuncture arises as the very individuals primed for success may find themselves ill-equipped for collaborative endeavours, an essential component of burgeoning career trajectories. Presently, students find themselves ensconced within the intricacies of 21st-century societal paradigms, the dynamics of which necessitate adeptness in a gamut of skills beyond traditional scholastic parameters (Uçak, 2022).

Consequently, educational institutions face the formidable challenge of recalibrating their pedagogical approaches to meet the demands of an ever-evolving landscape. The imperative is to redefine educational standards, propelling students towards success not solely

predicated on academic achievement but rooted in the nuanced mastery of 21st-century skills (Beathe, 2020). Chief among these competencies are working together, taking responsibility for their learning, talking to each other face-to-face, being nice to each other, working well in groups, and having students from different backgrounds in the same group (Abramczyk, 2020). The onus is on schools to navigate these uncharted waters and, in doing so, equip students with the multifaceted skill set requisite for triumph in both the professional arena and the broader spectrum of life experiences. As the pedagogical landscape undergoes this transformative paradigm shift, the synthesis of academic excellence with the holistic development of 21st-century skills becomes paramount, ensuring that the educational crucible produces graduates poised not only for individual success but also for seamless integration into the collaborative tapestry of the contemporary world (Angganing, 2022).

In the realm of education, instructors have to engage in the development of instructional materials organized into modules, often employing independent curation methodologies derived from diverse reference sources available on the internet, including platforms like YouTube, Quizizz, and various websites. The pedagogical approach integrates communication skills into the classroom dynamics, employing a blend of languages for instructional purposes. However, a notable shift occurs during assignments, where students are required to express themselves exclusively in English. Interestingly, the pedagogical emphasis

transitions from a concentration on communication skills within the instructional content to emphasis on how students wield the English language in their daily interactions, such as greetings and inquiries about the day and date. When considering the student demographic, a prevailing trend emerges wherein the majority of students adopt a passive role in the learning process, with only a minority actively participating in and contributing to the educational journey. This dynamic raises pertinent questions about the efficacy of the current teaching methods and calls for a deeper exploration into fostering active engagement and linguistic proficiency among students in the pursuit of comprehensive educational objectives.

The idea of cooperative learning embodies a deliberate attempt by educators in the Western world to create a learning method centred around group collaboration, with the aim of improving overall learning effectiveness (Saekhow, 2015). Cooperative learning endeavours to cultivate an environment where individuals collaborate towards common educational goals. This departure from traditional educational models, which often prioritize individual accomplishments, underscores the importance placed on collective experiences and the synergies that arise from working together (Sharma, 2018). The adoption of cooperative learning methods reflects a broader recognition within Western educational frameworks of the significance of social interaction, teamwork, and shared knowledge in optimizing the learning experience.

As educators keep on exploring new and exciting ways to teach, cooperative learning is an excellent example of how teaching methods are changing to help students learn better. In the world of cooperative learning (CL), teachers and researchers have been talking a lot about the unique things that make this approach so effective (Beathe, 2020). These things include working together, taking responsibility for their learning, talking to each other face-to-face, being nice to each other, working well in groups, and having students from different backgrounds in the same group (Cañabate, 2021).

In the research conducted by Singay in 2020, the study titled "An Investigation into Using Kagan Cooperative Learning Model to Enhance English Oral Communication Ability of Bhutanese Students" delved into the efficacy of employing a cooperative learning model for 7th-grade students. The primary objective was to enhance their English oral communication skills, and this study accomplished through a quasi-experimental design featuring both control and experimental groups. The research findings articulated by Singay underscored the positive impact of the cooperative learning methodology on the English oral communication proficiency of Bhutanese students. However, in the current study extends the investigation by applying a cooperative learning approach to a distinct set of 7th-grade students at MTsN 1 Tapin. This iteration introduces a qualitative twist to the research design, incorporating the innovative PhotoVoice methodology.

PhotoVoice is a cutting-edge data-collection methodology facilitating participatory action among research participants and their communities (Hidayah, 2020). The main goal of the PhotoVoice approach, developed by Caroline Wang and Mary Ann Burris in the 1990s, is to provide a forum for communities to communicate about their feelings, experiences, and difficulties related to education (Falconer, 2014). The purpose of employing the PhotoVoice method is to offer a platform for individuals to visually articulate their perspectives, allowing them to actively contribute to the research process (Birowo, 2020). The rationale behind the researcher's choice to adopt the PhotoVoice design lies in its capacity to meet the specific data collection needs aligned with the research question. PhotoVoice is an invaluable tool for representing the intricate nuances of the research outcomes, seamlessly aligning with the investigative objectives and providing a comprehensive portrayal of the gathered data (Tsang, 2020).

It is implied in the Al-Qur'an surah Ali Imran verses 103:

وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا ۗ وَادْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ  
 عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ  
 إِخْوَانًا وَكُنْتُمْ عَلَىٰ شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِنَ النَّارِ فَأَنْقَذَكُمْ مِنْهَا ۗ كَذَلِكَ  
 يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ۝

This verse imparts the significance of maintaining unity despite differences. In the context of cooperative learning, each group member assumes distinct roles, yet the ultimate objective remains consistent: achieving learning success. The verse serves as a reminder to value diversity and stay united in pursuing shared goals. The cooperative learning method beautifully visualizes the beauty of collaboration in the learning process in this verse. This beauty founded in the harmony created, where each group member contributes uniquely, fostering a dynamic and supportive learning atmosphere. The allure of cooperative learning is not only reflected in improved learning outcomes but also in the development of interpersonal skills and the cultivation of a collaborative spirit that enriches students' learning experiences

The objective of this study is to gain insight into how students perceive the use of Cooperative Learning to enhance their English communication skills. The study provided insight into lecturers at **MTsN 1 Tapin** and investigate teachers' perspectives on and obstacles to utilizing CL to enhance students' English communication abilities. Data were obtained through interviews and documentation. Consequently, the investigator encouraged research entitled “**A PhotoVoice Study: Portraying the Cooperative Learning Approach in Improving Students’ English Communication Skills.**”

## **B. Definition of Key Terms**

### 1. Cooperative Learning

Students in cooperative learning work together in small groups to complete tasks, improving both individual and group learning outcomes. The present study assesses the efficacy of Kagan structures which encompass techniques such as Think-pair-share, Numbered heads together, and Three-step-interview have been designed with the five specific cooperative learning stages.

### 2. Communication skills

Effective communication is essential for both the provision and receipt of information in a variety of contexts. The goal of the current study is to use cooperative learning to assess students' English verbal and nonverbal communication skills in a real classroom setting.

### 3. PhotoVoice

The PhotoVoice method, a qualitative participatory-action research design, was used in this study to collect and analyze data in the form of student-taken pictures that are used as examples. The images illustrate the students' emotional experiences and challenges throughout five stages in implementing cooperative learning techniques.

## **C. Research Questions**

The aforementioned study background influenced the formulation of the research questions, which were intended to help the investigator

ascertain how Cooperative Learning affected students' English communication abilities. The research questions are as follows:

1. How do the photos represent students' emotional experience in improving English communication skills through the cooperative learning approach?
2. What challenges do students face in improving English communication skills through the Cooperative Learning approach?

#### **D. Objectives of Study**

1. To explore students' emotional experiences through cooperative learning approach in improving students' English communication skills
2. To explore students' challenges faced in improving English communication skills through the Cooperative Learning approach.

#### **E. Significance of Study**

The research outcomes are anticipated to make a noteworthy addition to the current corpus of knowledge within the domain, including:

a. For Teachers

Motivating to help teachers learn about challenges through the Cooperative Learning approach and serve as guidance for English educators who would like to utilize Kagan CL to enhance their students' English communication skills.

b. For students

The aim is to enhance students' English language proficiency, specifically in communication, by increasing their level of

engagement, motivation, and capability after learning the Cooperative Learning approach.

c. For future studies

The research informed other researchers about implementing Cooperative Learning while enhancing students' communication skills. This study's discoveries can be advantageous for conducting additional suggestions for further research.