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# Language Learning Through Collaboration: A Reflective Transcontinental Study on Students' Experiences with Cooperative Projects

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## ABSTRACT

This study explores Cooperative Project-Based Learning's (CPBL) beneficial impacts on students' motivation, confidence, and efficiency in language learning in comparison to traditional learning methods. While the latter is based on a teacher-centered approach, modern pedagogies have shifted to different procedures emphasizing student agency by employing methodologies rooted in learner autonomy and responsibility. CPBL is a collaborative learning and project-based task combination, promoting active learning and real-world language application. Given that, the literature reveals a notable gap in addressing students' perspectives on CPBL. This study was grounded in data from an online survey, gathering responses from 40 language learners and educators from Morocco, the United States, the United Kingdom, and the Philippines. The results demonstrated that this methodology is widely favored by both student and teacher cohorts, since most respondents (73.7%) affirmed that engaging in language learning through CPBL cultivates greater cognitive engagement and conceptual depth than standard methods, due to its effectiveness in strengthening students' confidence when transferring learned concepts to everyday contexts. Moreover, participants in this questionnaire had positive feedback concerning their experience with CPBL teamwork tasks. However, a remarkable portion of the participants (35 %) had a neutral stance about the method's ability to boost their confidence and motivation. Highlighting the importance of involving students in language classes that implement the CPBL methodology, the study findings contribute to the growing body of literature on collaborative learning, providing practical implications for implementing student-centered pedagogies.

## KEYWORDS

**Cooperative project-based learning (CPBL)**

**Traditional methods**

**Language learning through CPBL**

**Students' perspective on CPBL**

## Introduction

Amid the wide array of contemporary educational methodologies, PBL has become widely recognized as a pioneer of pedagogical approaches owing to the favorable outcomes it produces for students' critical thinking skills, problem-solving abilities, and attentive participation by including them in perceptually tangible projects, which necessitate the implementation of different skills, hence making the learning process entertaining and meaningful. Parallelly, collaborative learning tackles the aspect of socializing in a learning environment and its significance, accentuating that knowledge is harnessed through conversations and teamwork.

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The integration and the combination of both collaborative learning and project-based learning inside the English classrooms have shown incrementally positive results (Putimasurai et al. 124).

Cooperative learning has evolved into a paradigm-shifting methodology in the field of language education, constructing active student-centered environments that improve linguistic competence, performance, and interpersonal skills (Li 2). Cooperative project Based Learning (CPBL), the approach that combines both cooperative and project or problem-based learning principles, provides a structured framework through which students collaborate in groups to complete authentic language tasks, which in return helps with fostering critical thinking, creativity, and effective communication (Mohd-Yusof et al. 13). By engaging through CPBL, students not only improve and refine their language abilities but also gain important 21st-century skills like cooperation, leadership, and problem solving, all of which are necessary for academic and professional success (Othman and Idrus 57). This study analyzes students' perceptions and experiences with CPBL in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms to understand how collaborative dynamics impact language learning outcomes and personal growth.

Language learning through traditional methods has remained the norm since the beginning of formal education. Teachers have been the main element in the classroom, controlling the flow of information by being the central medium through which students perceive and learn fundamental core notions. Instructors are the only ones responsible for explaining the concepts that concern grammar, lexicon, syntax, and semantics. Meanwhile, students in this context play a passive role limited to absorbing and memorizing information as it is and returning it on the day of the exam. With enough modernization, foreign language learning has developed and experienced a significant shift; it has become more student-centered rather than teacher-centered, focusing on the social aspect of learning (Jacobs and Farrell 4).

This led to the introduction of a new way of learning called cooperative project-based learning, which aims to equip learners with the necessary hard and soft skills crucial for achieving and complying with the expectations of the modern academic and workforce standards. Furthermore, it is a substitution for conventional pedagogical methods, combining two complementary and mutually reinforcing approaches, both directed toward a unified objective: boosting learner engagement in cooperative project development within the context of language learning (Zaafour and Salaberri-Ramiro 1).

While there is a shortage of studies conducted by Moroccan researchers concerning higher education students' perceptions regarding the effect of CPBL on their English language learning, this present paper offers a discussion of CPBL as an approach to language teaching and learning that can promote students' susceptibility to learn. It also highlights students' perceptions and experiences concerning this method. Asserting the idea that students in general have convenient access to materials and resources that are essential to producing successful projects. Indeed, this study attempted to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the impact of CPBL on students' motivational levels to achieve success in language learning?
2. To what extent does the implementation of CPBL in language learning boost students' confidence through the utilization of learned concepts in contextually relevant situations, including formal evaluations and scholarly dialogues?
3. Is CPBL a more effective approach than traditional methods for enhancing language learning?
4. What are students' perceptions of the implementation of CPBL in English language education?

## Literature Review

Cooperative Project-Based Learning (CPBL) is a modern instructional method that allows students to use the language while working on creative and innovative projects like simulating and replicating real-life scenarios, gamifying the classroom and praising the best answers or practices, creating videos or podcasts, project presentations or posters, among many other creative ways of learning, where the students are the central agents of their learning. While educators are the mentors who guide and ensure that their students are actively engaging with the material while fostering effective learning through dynamic and interest-driven instructional strategies, rather than memorizing abstract aspects of the language, such as grammar and vocabulary. These strategies guarantee that the students will achieve optimum learning outcomes (Thomas 4). The substantial body of literature that has been conducted on the effects of CPBL on language learning and on the students' psyche and openness to such methods, indicated that this approach positively influences their creativity, level of motivation, and enhanced favorable portrayal of oneself. Given that, the majority of participants who engage through CPBL find this approach highly effective. Moreover, project-based learning positively impacts learners' collaborative skills, communication, innovation, and problem-solving skills (Andriyani and Anam 51). Additionally, from the students' perception, PBL proved to be crucial in improving enthusiasm, confidence, self-directed learning, and collaborative learning skills.

Similarly, from the teachers' perspective, PBL fosters motivation to teach and increases satisfaction (Putri et al. 1151). CPBL proved to be not only efficient in reformulating and enhancing students' mental capabilities and boosting positive emotions but also helped in refining vital academic skills crucial for the learners' academic and workplace journey. Dewi illustrates that when learners work on projects, they are engaged in purposeful, focused communication in a natural context (341–42). Moreover, the act of participating in relevant activities emboldens the learners to use EFL language skills authentically. Among the wide range of communicative methods, public speeches and spoken reports serve as effective means for advancing students' communicative and speaking proficiency. Nevertheless, preparing such activities requires that students craft a meticulously organized speech and present on a topic that best reflects their individual interests. Brooks and Wilson demonstrate that an oral presentation is beneficial for learners as it provides them with the opportunities to use their second language (L2) to communicate with others in a natural way (199). When the students stand in front of their classmates and speak, they practice and refine their articulatory abilities of pronouncing words and formulating sentences. It is an ideal preparation for their authentic speaking (Thornbury 91).

In this vein, this study seeks to explore how CPBL helps in the process of learning EFL. Beyond that, it seeks to clarify the theoretical foundation of CPBL and how it can function as an innovative approach that fosters inclusivity in English language classrooms. Additionally, the present study aims to illustrate how CPBL involves learners with the target language in a meaningful and creative way. "Learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience" (Kolb 38). Kolb emphasizes in his book, *Experiential learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development*, that learning is a process that must be achieved through experience. CPBL helps language learning by actually using the language naturally, in real-life situations while working on projects, instead of just passively receiving rules and instructions. In CPBL, students have a diverse range of opportunities to act, speak, write, and understand the language in real-life scenarios. Additionally, it helps enhance teamwork, creativity, and confidence (Richards and Rodgers 207; Johnson and Johnson 68). Thus, this study intended to cover the effects and impact of CPBL on learners' motivation,

confidence, and general efficacy in language learning. Moreover, it aimed at exploring learners' opinions on the effectiveness of project-based learning. The findings of this research could provide a deeper understanding of students' perspectives and their stance on this pedagogical approach.

## Theoretical Foundations of CPBL

CPBL is deeply grounded in constructivist and sociocultural learning theories. Vygotsky, in his book *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes*, states that students effectively develop their intellectual capacities through social interactions (86). He discusses the concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), in which students' skills are boosted while learning through guidance from their educators. In CPBL, students work in groups, helping their peers and learning a language together through interaction. Project-based learning is likewise endorsed by prominent theorists, including Piaget, who maintains that knowledge is constructed through active participation and critical reflection on learning experiences (11,12; 153,154). CPBL is described as a process where students learn by creating and actively engaging in language tasks; this could occur in different learning styles. In cooperative learning, students work in groups and assist each other; every student plays a vital role that contributes to the group work's success. In CPBL, students use the language to communicate ideas, solve problems, and give feedback to each other (Johnson and Johnson 45). Moreover, through this approach, students learn by working on a project, which is most probably built on a problematic question or situation. While tackling projects, students use multiple high-order abilities, which involve planning, researching, analyzing, creating, and presenting the culminating output of their project-based learning task. CPBL combines individual as well as cooperative teamwork to find solutions to different tasks or assignments, which results in creating an interactive way to learn.

## Benefits and Challenges of CPBL in Language Learning

Guided by these theoretical frameworks, studies indicate that CPBL improves several aspects of language learning. Working in groups and exchanging ideas often helps students develop their four language skills (listening, reading, speaking, and writing). Additionally, the implementation of projects promotes the development of a broad spectrum of language subskills, including vocabulary, spelling, punctuation, sociolinguistic and strategic competence, and both cognitive and metacognitive abilities, while also nurturing a broad set of critical life skills, among others. Hence, supporting more in-depth learning and information retention. Evenddy, Gailea, and Syafrizal claim that CPBL raises motivation and student autonomy by boosting their sense of commitment, employing ownership of their learning journey, and it also strengthens their soft skills, such as goal-setting, logic-based decision making, and adequate time management, allowing them to become active contributors to their own educational journey, by linking together the theoretical and practical aspects of language learning (460–461). Research on PBL indicates that students acquainted with these methods achieve higher academic results, exceeding their peers in standardized tests as a result of the profound understanding improved by this method (Bhat and Dar 254).

While CPBL offers many advantages, it also comes with certain challenges in language classrooms. A common issue is unequal individual participation in group work, where some students take the lead or conduct the majority of the work, leaving the others unable to contribute to the tasks assigned, leading to an imbalance in group work (Li 2). Additionally, CPBL can be demanding in terms of time and may clash with rigid curricula or exam-heavy systems. In addition to these fundamental problems, recent studies pointed to other, often

disregarded, collaboration challenges found in classrooms using the CPBL method. One of which is priority conflict within students' groups, where students can have different motivations or different focuses, which eventually leads to contrasting goals and uneven task distribution (Hussein 9-12). Moreover, Hussein mentioned that scheduling issues also emerge in CPBL environments, where some students find it difficult to arrange meetings between them or even balance CPBL assignments with other academic tasks (9). Educators must be ready to handle group interactions, offer support, and ensure reasonable evaluation for every student. As Mouni points out, although CPBL supports and encourages deeper learning, its success depends on thoughtful preparation, proper teacher training, and strong institutional assistance to work effectively (93; 98,99).

### Existing Research on CPBL in a Language Learning Context

As studies showed, cooperative project-based learning is an impactful field of research. The choice of CPBL as a research topic is a testament that scholars have engaged in thoughtful and in-depth studies. Among them, El Moudden and Lamkhantar, in their study, indicated that the majority of participants (74%) think that project work provides a high chance of developing their students' speaking and listening skills. As mentioned in the findings, 36% have also indicated that reading comprehension, vocabulary, and research writing skills have significantly enhanced due to carrying out projects at university (437).

Furthermore, their study also covered the educators' perspectives on incorporating CPBL in the teaching of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), and how factors like age can influence it. In a qualitative study by Haddad, interviews were conducted with twelve teachers from a magnet school to study their perspective regarding project-based learning (PBL). The results showed that while educators with different experience levels recognized its benefits, the younger and less experienced teachers were likely to implement it. These educators have found that PBL corresponds with their teaching philosophies and are more flexible in meeting its requirements (52,54;63,64). On the other hand, more experienced teachers pointed out the obstacles they have found while implementing PBL, such as the extensive planning time needed and the administrative support it requires (Haddad 51-60).

This research aims to explain mainly the perspectives of students of EFL on cooperative project-based learning (CPBL). Additionally, the research aims to know the level EFL teachers implement CPBL in their classrooms, and the core challenges preventing its use, as well as highlighting the importance of guidance while embracing the approach. Two university professors and twelve educators graduated from the Moroccan Regional Center for Education and Training Professions (CRMEF) participated in the online questionnaire that included their definition of CPBL, their experience with it, the benefits they gained, and the obstacles they faced when they implemented it. Both the research was informative and impactful in explaining the importance of the use of CPBL for EFL practitioners. On the other hand, research highlights students' experiences, and their preferences regarding the approach, how they feel about it, or even the benefits as well as the drawbacks they face while working cooperatively on their authentic projects.

## Methodology

The study employed quantitative research design, targeting university professors and students serving as the principal respondents. A well-structured survey was designed to examine how

participants from varied cultural and educational contexts perceive the effectiveness of CPBL as an approach to language instruction.

### Participants

A total of 40 volunteering participants provided their opinions and experiences with CPBL. The survey included language students across four different countries: Morocco, the United States of America, the United Kingdom, and the Philippines. Despite the participants' differences in culture, language, educational systems, age, academic level, and profession, they shared interests and experiences with cooperative project-based language learning. This diversity provided valuable insights into how this method is perceived across different backgrounds and nationalities when related to the learning and teaching of English through group work projects.

The 40 participants, who were both language professors and students from different continents, were made up of 52.5% females and 47.5% males. They were distributed based on academic levels, with 92.3% bachelor's and 7.7 % master's degree holders.

### Instrument and Ethical Considerations

The survey was distributed via social media, targeting language students and professors, allowing the inclusion of participants from different countries and continents. Prior to completing the questionnaire, participants were provided with an introductory message outlining the purpose of the study and the estimated time required to complete the survey, and they were also assured that their identities would be kept confidential and anonymous. Participants had the freedom to withdraw at any point without providing a reason; that was to guarantee that ethical standards were met.

The survey was refined multiple times by experts in the field to ensure clarity, validity, and the collection of meaningful insights. The questionnaire remained open for a period of 18 days, during which participants were able to complete it at their own pace, allowing for the collection of reliable and completely subjective responses. The online participation yielded sufficient data, with all responses systematically compiled and securely stored in a secure digital database.

### Data Analysis

Once the data were successfully collected, the figures were carefully analyzed. These graphs provided statistical analysis with clear percentages to identify the most common responses. This helped measure the recurring patterns in participants' experiences with CPBL. For the open-ended questions, the answers were divided into groups based on their similarities, ideas, and then studied carefully. This combination of quantitative data significantly allowed for a more in-depth understanding of how CPBL is perceived across multiple cultures, academic, as well as professional backgrounds.

## Results of the Study

The following results section outlines the key results obtained from the survey data, beginning with assessing students' motivation levels when engaging in CPBL, as depicted in Figure 1, which illustrates the multiple levels of students' motivation associated with participation in CPBL.

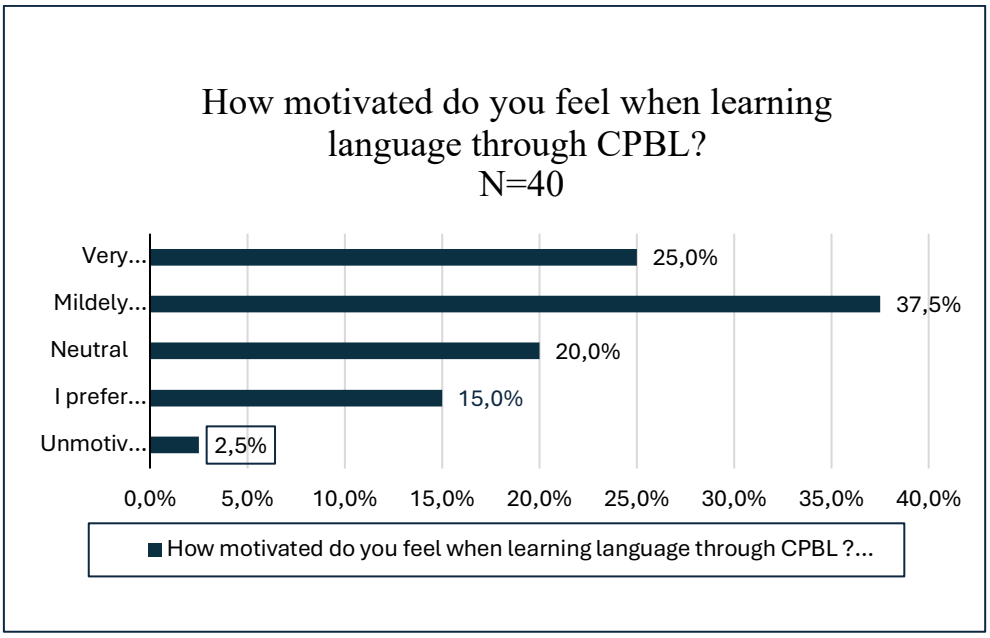



**Fig. 1.** Students' motivation levels with cooperative projects**.**

The multinational survey results from the 40 participants showed (Fig. 1) a varied level of motivation when engaging in cooperative projects. A quite significant portion of the survey participants (37.5%) felt mildly motivated, followed by 15% who revealed that they tend to work by themselves regarding language learning, while 20% have indicated that they have a neutral view regarding language cooperative work. Notably, (25%) feel very motivated, while a smaller proportion of respondents reported experiencing slight or complete demotivation when tasked with collaborative project assignments. The results suggest that although collaborative learning is broadly motivating for most language students across various countries, a considerable subset nonetheless favors individual modes of working.

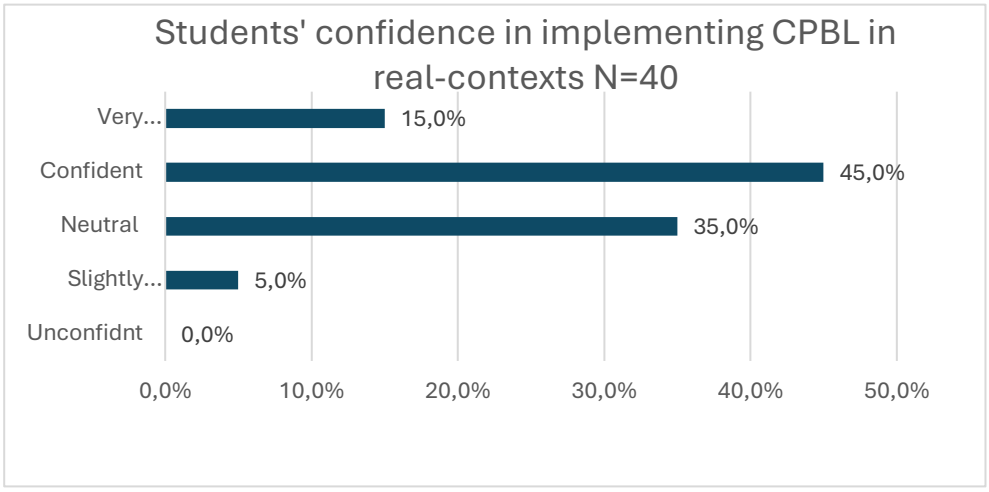



**Fig. 2.** The level of students' confidence in implementing CPBL skills in real-world contexts

When participants were asked to what extent they felt confident in relating the knowledge acquired through CPBL to real-life contexts, such as examinations or interactions with native or non-native speakers (Figure 2), their responses were varied, though predominantly favorable. Nearly half (45%) indicated they were confident, with 15% reporting they were very confident. In contrast, 35% remained neutral, which could indicate that they are uncertain or would like to observe how CPBL performs in practice. Very few (5%) indicated that they were slightly unsure, with no respondents expressing that they were not confident at all. These answers reflect that the majority of students are confident in using what they learn, but some might need more experience or time to fully understand how CPBL affects their real-life reactions.

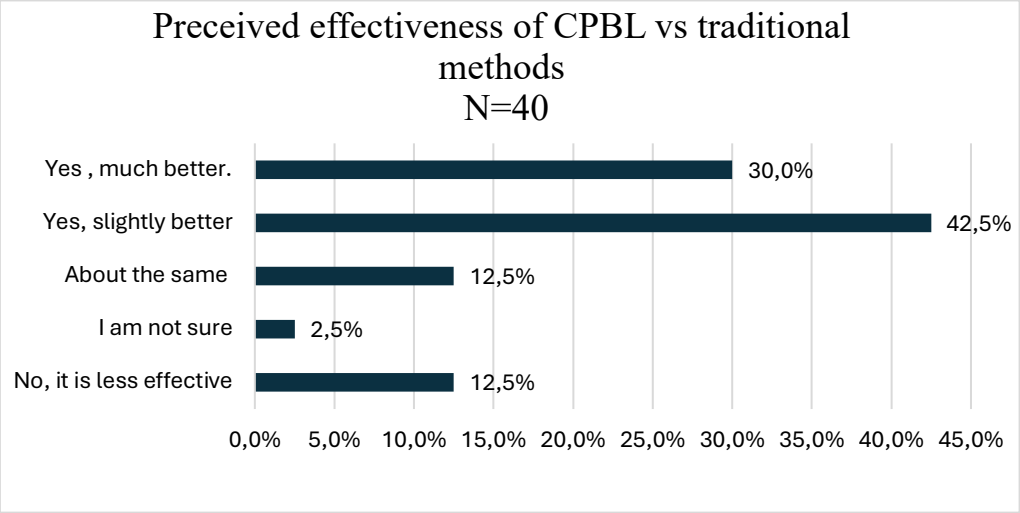



**Fig. 3.** How students perceive the effectiveness of cooperative projects.

When being presented with the question of whether CPBL improves course understanding more than traditional methods (Figure 3), most of the students responded positively. Out of the 40 participants, 42.5% stated that (CPBL) facilitates their understanding of the course slightly better, while 30% stated that it helped them much better, in contrast, only 12.5% felt it was less effective, and others 15% remain unsure or see no difference between CPBL and traditional methods. These findings suggested a strong tendency towards the effectiveness of CPBL, with 72.5% of the participants perceiving a clear advantage over traditional language learning methods.

## Team Collaboration and Its Effect on the Perception of CPBL in Learning a Language

When students were asked directly about their collaborative experience, through questions such as, 'How effectively did you and your team collaborate during the project? Did certain members contribute more than others? Have you ever had any negative experiences working on a cooperative project, and if so, how has it influenced your language learning journey and overall perception of (CPBL)?' Their responses provided nuanced insights into the interpersonal dynamics and long-term impact of cooperative learning. Many students expressed that their groups worked efficiently together because they fairly distributed tasks, and they supported one another, which often led to successful projects and intellectually rewarding learning experiences. Some specifically mentioned that when everyone contributed, the final product was consistent

and satisfying. One participant notably described their most recent project as 'amazing,' a sentiment linked to the equitable and enthusiastic involvement of every group member.

However, collaboration was not always smooth; a recurring issue was the irregular distribution of tasks, as several students noted that some team members put in more effort than others. This imbalance, despite not being uncommon, often leads to challenges, such as stress, frustration, or even disappointment and discouragement on both how the project turned out and the learning process, especially when others relied too heavily on a single person or didn't contribute fairly. A few participants highlighted that they are unable to communicate properly within the group, which resulted in one person unintentionally or forcibly doing most of the work. For introverted students or those who are used to working individually, the implementation of cooperative group projects could be quite challenging.

Some English graduates from the Moroccan Regional Center for Education and Training Professions (CRMEF) shared past negative experiences where they felt undervalued or overwhelmed by unequal efforts. However, interestingly, many of them provide positive feedback on what they learnt from those challenging experiences, such as the importance of clearly defining roles when assigning tasks, developing communicative competence and life skills, and enhancing the sense of accountability. Based on the aforementioned points, those students sincerely expressed their belief in the value of CPBL when implemented correctly, which, as they mentioned, significantly contributed to enhancing the professional quality of their teaching experience.

Given that, a few respondents demonstrated concerns about CPBL's effectiveness for all learners. One participant pointed out that, in practice, not every student can understand, let alone explain, their assigned parts, sometimes merely reading what was generated by AI tools such as ChatGPT. This raised questions about how deeply students are engaging with the content in such projects.

In general, while experiences differed depending on the group work effectiveness, the majority of students viewed the collaborative projects as a valuable opportunity for skill development. CPBL was widely appreciated for how it implements real-world skills like teamwork, communication, responsibility, and creativity, even by those who had encountered past negative experiences along the way.

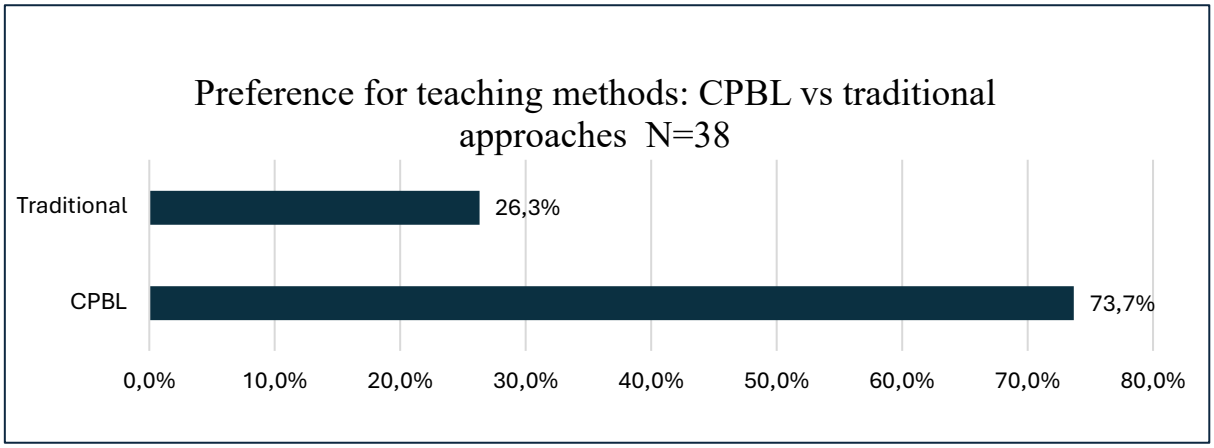



**Fig. 4.** Students' preference between CPBL and traditional methods.

When asked to consider the use of CPBL compared to traditional language teaching methods used in the EFL classrooms (Figure 4), a vast majority (73.7%) of students preferred CPBL

(Figure 4). Hence, the current findings indicate the students' preference and their positive perception of CPBL as a more engaging and effective approach than traditional language teaching methods. Meanwhile, 26.3% still prefer traditional language teaching methods, which could reflect preference for familiar controlled learning environments, predictability, or individual study patterns.

The participants showed a clear preference for more interactive and student-centered methods, possibly reflecting that CPBL was not only perceived as advantageous but also as a method that meets the needs and interests of students within the modern classroom environment.

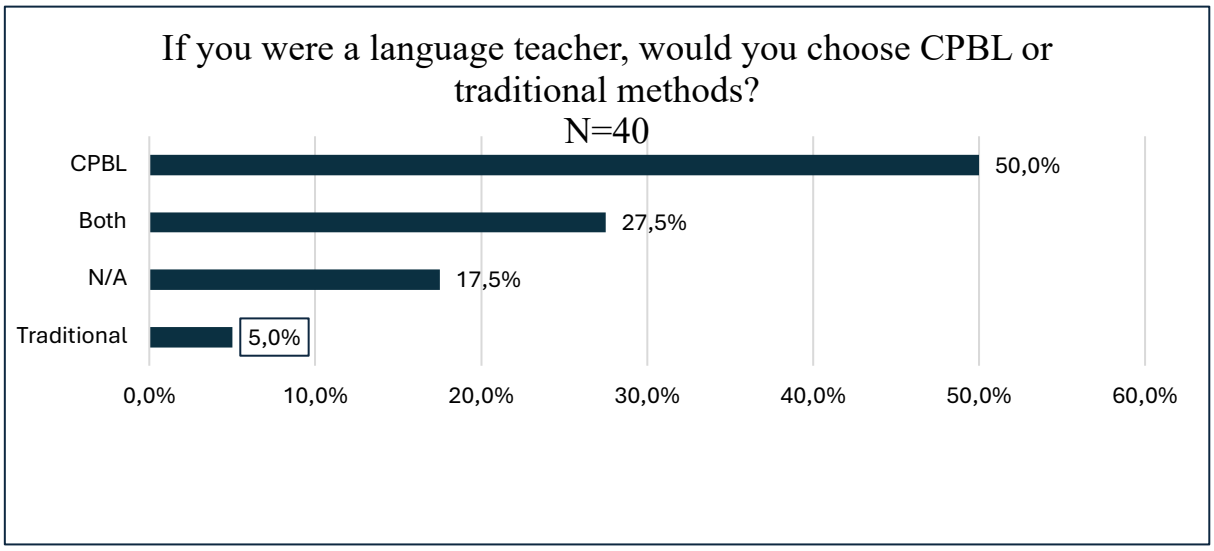



**Fig. 5.** Students' Comparison of CPBL and Traditional Methods in Classroom Settings.

When asked, "As a future language teacher, which approach would you embrace more in your classroom, CPBL or traditional methods, and why?" (Figure 5). Half of the responders (50%) prefer using CPBL in their future classrooms, mentioning its ability to enhance students' engagement, critical thinking, and collaboration, in addition to many other 21st-century hard and soft skills. Numerous participants believed that CPBL makes the language learning process more enjoyable, allowing students to develop fundamental soft skills like teamwork, problem-solving, and communication.

While responses called for traditional methods, claiming the ease of implementation and structured learning. Others, (27.5%) preferred the combination of both CPBL and traditional methods, identifying the value of flexibility and catering to diverse student learning needs. While 5% chose to rely on traditional methods if given the opportunity.

According to data, the reasons for preferring CPBL include its ability to encourage active learning, and how it helps with real-life application of knowledge, and helps students overcome stage fright and shyness, all of which are learning obstacles that students need to overcome. Some respondents were also grateful for how CPBL allows students to take initiative in their learning and develop self-confidence.

A few participants noted that there are a lot of factors to consider when choosing between CPBL and traditional methods, such as the course objectives, student personalities and attitudes, and educators' preferences. Overall, the findings suggest that CPBL is the go-to choice among future teachers due to its benefits in promoting student engagement and skill development; however, a mixed approach may be the most effective way to meet all students' needs.

To conclude, the results highlight that many educators were found lacking the full understanding of what CPBL is, as for the use of it, many others admitted the scarcity of CPBL

use due to the shortage of tools, lack of adequate training, and how some of them perceive the CPBL approach. Yet, in many cases, the current teaching environment does not encourage its implementation. Additionally, EFL educators reported the presence of many hurdles, for instance, the existence of large and crowded classrooms, content-heavy curriculum, insufficient time frame, inappropriate tools, and a shortage of institutional support. Indeed, EFL Moroccan educators need institutional support, effective training, and guidance to improve the use of CPBL in EFL tertiary classrooms.

## Discussion

This study provides significant insights concerning the perceptions of EFL educators and students from various cultural and educational backgrounds regarding language learning through the CPBL approach. The findings determine both the strengths and shortcomings of CPBL in TEFL and its effectiveness as a substitute for traditional methods.

### Motivation and Confidence in CPBL

A large segment of the contributors, 37.5%, claimed to be mildly motivated when engaging in Cooperative Project-Based Learning (CPBL). Meanwhile, 25% felt very motivated. However, 15% opted to work individually. Despite the CPBL's efficiency as a language learning method, some students may still favor studying independently due to cultural, educational backgrounds, and negative past teamwork experiences. This range of results is consistent with previous studies demonstrating that cooperative learning increases motivation for some learners but not for others, all is shaped by one's cultural and educational contexts (Al-Tamimi & Tamimi; Putimasurai et al 4). Parallelly, the feedback regarding the confidence level varied, 45% felt confident and 15% very confident in applying CPBL-acquired skills in real-life scenarios. Khoudri and Zeriouh found that 88% of students are confident and motivated enough to create projects independently, and 76% of students are willing to apply the skills they have learned through CPBL in real-life situations (47). This reveals that despite CPBL's ability to help students develop their language skills, some students might need systematic support to fully trust their language abilities when it comes to applying them in real-life situations. Responders with a neutral attitude towards CPBL, who make up 35% of the total participants, demonstrated a need for sustained exposure to authentic, scaffolded CPBL tasks to increase engagement and trust-building with CPBL, and to form positive attitudes regarding its effectiveness in real-life applications.

### Effectiveness of CPBL vs. Traditional Methods

A large majority of participants (73.7%) reported that language learning through CPBL is more effective than traditional methods in terms of enhancing students' understanding of the subject matter. This aligns with existing literature findings on active learning methodologies in the classroom and the effectiveness of learner-centered methods in language education. CPBL promotes collaboration, critical thinking, and deeper engagement with knowledge, all of which can improve cognitive processing and retention (Prince 223–31). The active role of students who participate in negotiating meaning and producing new information in a social setting is thought to enhance higher-order thinking skills, as emphasized in Vygotsky's constructivist theory (57; 88; 90).

This tendency is supported by studies showing that students who participate in project-based learning and cooperative learning report high levels of engagement, autonomy, and motivation,

all of which contribute to their perceived learning gains and the increase of learners' communication skills. Furthermore, it renders them more open to cooperation, eventually resulting in better academic and educational outcomes (Beigzadeh et al. 3). Furthermore, language learners benefit from the meaningful learning experiences provided by CPBL, which makes language use more intentional, contextualized, and oriented towards real-world problem solving (Beckett and Slater 109;115). These features are frequently missing or underutilized in traditional teacher-led instruction, which could explain the participants' significant preference for CPBL.

Conversely, 26.3% feel that CPBL is less or as effective as traditional methods. This shows that the CPBL impact may be reliant on its implementation performance, the group's harmony, and individual learner choices. Such perspectives are most frequently the result of variations in implementation quality, dynamics among project teams, or individual learners' preferences for more organized perspectives in training (Bell 42). Scholars warn that if CPBL is not well-structured or if students lack training in teamwork or time management, the technique may fail to achieve its full potential (Brush and Saye 46). Thus, the success of CPBL appears to be mediated by instructional design, instructor facilitation, and learner preparation. These findings imply that, while CPBL can significantly improve comprehension and learner engagement, it is not a one-size-fits-all approach. Its effectiveness is dependent on strategic execution, close observation of group dynamics, and task alignment with learners' language proficiency levels and goals. As a result, teacher training and ongoing professional development are critical for maximizing the pedagogical benefits of CPBL in language classrooms (Krajcik and Blumenfeld 322).

## Team Collaboration: Strengths and Challenges

The outcomes of team collaboration revealed a paradox; although some participants expressed a preference for CPBL as a means of developing teamwork and collaboration, others stated their dissatisfaction concerning unequal participation. These problems could be illustrated as controlling members, the absence of responsibility, accountability, and lack of communication, which were redundant themes among susceptible introverted minorities. This corroborates the results found by Hussein, which highlighted that collaboration challenges are caused by course oversaturation, where some students engage in extracurricular activities. The previously mentioned extracurricular activities obstruct equal participation in collaborative tasks (9-12). Despite these barriers, many respondents, including those with unfavorable experiences, affirmed that CPBL trained them with high-value skills. This indicates that CPBL, while being challenging, exerts long-term benefits in skill development, leading to the dismissal of initial difficulties. This corresponds with the findings of Huysken, Olivey, McElmurry, Gao, and Avis, who indicate that CPBL boosts students' performance. These findings highlight the shortcomings and prominent issues commonly faced by students. Furthermore, they advocate for a reform in the approaches employed while using CPBL in language learning sessions, such as assigning roles according to one's abilities, identifying and supporting withdrawn individuals, instilling time management and peer-evaluation abilities among pupils, and developing practical strategies that accurately address participation gaps (6-18).

## Preference for CPBL Over Traditional Method

The compelling preference for CPBL (73,7%) of students and educators emphasized its inclination towards inter-activeness and engagement as a pedagogical approach. Respondents accentuated CPBL's function and involvement in overcoming a multitude of obstacles: anxiety induced by the process of using a foreign language during articulating speech as a consequence

of accent-related insecurities and the fear of judgement (Miguel and Carney 3-4). Real-world encouragement of communication skills, creativity nurturing, and productivity instilling. All of which are qualities that can hardly be promoted in traditional lecture-based methods.

Nonetheless, 26.6% of the participants who are in favor of traditional methods highlighted the structure, predictability, and ease of appraisal as central advantages. This preference may also be the result of the clear guidelines the traditional method offers in language learning classrooms with standardized curricula and a fixed format that a lot of students find predictable and easier to follow, especially during the rising stress caused by the exams. Moreover, traditional methods prioritize linguistic accuracy, as highlighted by Sattarova's comparative analysis (217-220). 27.5% of those who endorse the idea of mixing both traditional and collaborative project-based learning approaches propose that a hybridized model combining both collaborative project-based learning strengths with the traditional method's explicitness might prove to be the most potent and viable manner to adjust to diverse language learning needs. This suggests that educators should diversify learning methods to better accommodate different learning styles each student has, this mix of CPBL and traditional methods will lead to achieving educators' goals and objectives (McQuown 6-19).

### Cultural and Educational Suggestions

This study also implies possible cultural influences on collaborative project-based language learning perceptibility, given the transcontinental case. For reference, collectivist cultures, such as Morocco and the Philippines, may inherently coincide with collaborative learning, whereas individualistic educational systems, such as the United States of America and the United Kingdom, might be exposed to more resistance from students adapted to ideologies related to independence.

### Recommendations for Further Research

Although this study provides valuable information on the students' perspective on CPBL and its effectiveness in boosting their motivation, confidence, and academic performance, more research is required to cover a large number of students and to consider factors like students' preferences for CPBL over traditional methods and the impact of cultural and social background on this methodology and their language learning through CPBL. Future research might also tackle the teachers' role after receiving the necessary training with such a method, further increasing its effectiveness and success rate.

## Conclusion

This research investigated the effectiveness and impact of Cooperative Project-Based Learning (CPBL) on language learning, with a focus on students' perspectives and experiences from various parts of the world. Its primary goal was to determine whether CPBL enhances confidence and motivation in EFL classrooms in comparison with traditional methods. Upon reviewing the data collected from the online survey, which was distributed across four countries, the findings clearly show how CPBL influenced students' motivation to work more effectively. It boosted students' confidence in performance and in explaining aspects to peers and showed how beneficial it is compared to traditional learning methods. The results support the emerging agreement in modern language education that CPBL promotes not just linguistic competence but also learner autonomy, cooperation skills, and active participation (Bich Phuong and Tham 103). Participants reported an enhanced readiness to speak and a great sense of ownership over

their learning, both of which are necessary for long-term motivation and academic progress in EFL environments (Maulina 337). Furthermore, this study contributes to a larger body of research that supports the transition from teacher-centered to learner-centered pedagogies, which are better suited for the 21st-century classroom, particularly in response to the demands of globalized and technology-mediated learning settings (Li et al. 1). CPBL's blend of real-world relevance, peer interaction, and problem-solving provides learners with meaningful contexts for language use, making learning more authentic and personally relevant (Astaifi 1934).

While traditional approaches are still useful, the findings of this study show that when implemented successfully, CPBL dramatically improves students' emotional and cognitive involvement. These findings emphasize the need to implement instructional frameworks that not only offer material but also foster social and communicative skills required for success in both academic and professional settings.

CPBL helped students track their learning progress and encouraged them to work with others and practice English more often. However, a few other students expressed the opposite opinion, arguing that CPBL is less effective for language learning. This suggests that CPBL does not influence all students equally; its results vary based on students' personalities and learning styles. These findings demonstrate the value of innovative teaching methods like CPBL for language learning classrooms. This method equips students with soft skills like critical thinking, collaborative work, and public speaking, which are vital inside or outside the classroom. The majority of students preferred CPBL, indicating that it adds a sense of enjoyment to learning, unlike traditional passive classrooms.

One major limitation of this study is the small number of participants due to time restrictions during the research process. However, despite this limitation, the research made an important contribution to the TEFL field, particularly because the data were collected across four different countries. It is therefore recommended that future research be conducted with a larger-scale group of participants to explore further and validate the findings presented here.

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