

## **PEER TEACHING AS A METHODOLOGY TO TEACH GRAMMAR : A CASE STUDY**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The study aims at investigating the possibilities of using peer teaching in teaching grammar. The study was conducted on the Pre-Diploma students and the findings suggest that peer teaching does help to improve students' level of understanding of English Language.

### **BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

Peer teaching is not a new phenomenon or something as recent as Language Learning Strategies (LLS) or Learning Styles. In fact, the origin of peer teaching can be traced back to 1789 when Andrew Bell first developed a system for peer tutoring. Then in 1801, Joseph Lancaster set up a school to cater for the working class children and it received tremendous respond. He was overwhelmed with students and was facing severe financial constrain at his school. Lancaster then developed a system to meet the demand and shortage of teachers. It was a system of peer-mediated instruction whereby a group of students had a monitor who was responsible for their learning. The monitor was well equipped with the proficiency needed to administer lessons to the students or 'scholars' as they were known then. On top of that, there was also a 'monitor general' who monitored the overall performance of the monitors. The system worked well as the students were very responsive towards learning. The subjects taught were Reading and Mathematics, among others. Thus, it served as the basis for peer teaching.

The method was later condemned by most schools and the interest in peer teaching decreased. However, in the 1960's, there was a resurgence in interest towards this approach. Melanagro and Newark in 1969 rekindled the method as a mean to help underachieving students and it was a success (Goodlad, 1995). The approach generated much interest in the United States as it highlights on the problems of underachieving students (Topping, 1988). One can notice that there is a similarity in the objective of the implementation of the method. The approach was employed, to a great success, to help underachieving and underprivileged children.

Much has been said about the benefits of peer teaching by researchers and practitioners worldwide (Nattiv *et al* 1991, Wedman *et al* 1996 Bell, 1991, Johnson *et al* 1991). Peer teaching has been said to produce superior and improved performance (Fraser *et al* 1977 Koch 1992), increase confident level (Levene and Frank 1993) and generally increase self-esteem, academic and social development (Coiro 2001). Ensign (2000) further stipulates that peer teaching has managed to improve the overall cognitive and affective performance of students through cooperation and encouragement.

It appears that peer teaching has helped learners to learn language effectively. Therefore, the study serves to investigate this phenomenon as it applies to our local context and study the outcome of the research as compared to the proven findings.

### **OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

English grammar has always been a bane in the backbone for students as well as teachers. Learning and teaching grammar have never been described as easy and most teachers dread to teach grammar. Even native speakers still acquiring certain structures of grammar well into their adolescence years as pointed out by Carol Chomsky (1969). It is acknowledged, according to Larsen-Freeman, that learning grammar requires a great deal of time even for the skilled learners (Larsen-Freeman, 1997). Thus, for the second language learners, especially at the beginner's level, learning grammar may seem to be a momentous task.

There are many ways introduced on how to teach a second language from the early days of Grammar Translation Method and the Direct Method to Cooperative Learning to Problem Based Learning. The target is to understand the process of second language acquisition and thus making it easier for the learner to learn the fundamental of the language, and in particular, grammar. Previously, and still being widely practiced, grammar is taught through repetitive drills. However, the method may appear to be uninteresting and old to some of the learners. Therefore, the study looks at the teaching of grammar through cooperative learning. The method used in the study is peer teaching. The objective of the study, therefore, is to investigate the effectiveness of peer teaching as a methodology to teach grammar to ESL learners in UiTM Jengka in Pahang.

### **Research Questions**

The questions that the research aims to answer are listed below:

1. Is there an improvement in learners understanding of English?
2. Do learners find peer teaching useful?

These questions will serve as the guideline for the whole research and all the discussion and findings aim at answering the questions.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **Second Language Acquisition**

People learn languages other than their mother tongue for various reasons. The motives can be employment, study or simply as a pastime. Even more so nowadays as pointed out by Ellis (1997), the emergence of the 'World Wide Web' and globalisation has made communication an integral part of life as people expanded their communication beyond their local speech communities (Ellis, 1997). Ellis

(1997) further describes that this phenomenon has created the need to learn and understand how people learn a second language.

It is imperative that we look at the theories of language acquisition in order to grasp the reality of the second language acquisition. The focus will be on the Behaviourist and the Universal Grammar. This attempt is by no means an exhaustive one but will endeavor the basic principles of language learning

The Behaviourists believe that language acquisition is the formation of habits (Bloomfield 1933, Skinner 1957, Thorndike 1932 and Watson 1924). This view suggests that human beings are exposed to numerous stimuli in their environment through which they respond. It is the creation of these stimuli-response relationships, which are repeatedly reinforced, and in turn will form the habit. (Mitchell and Myles 1998: 23). Ellis mentions that this reinforcement will help the learner to remember (Ellis 1997:31). However, should the response be incorrect it will be abandoned by the learner in search of a better response which will then be reinforced. The basic language learning process is through imitation and practice (Mitchell and Myles 1998:24). Lightbown and Spada share the same view when they mention that behaviourists view imitation as practice as the primary process of language development (Lightbown and Spada 1993:9). It must be noted that according to Ellis (1997) behaviourists' account of L2 acquisition emphasize only what can be observed. This means the input the learner receives and the output he produces. It does not take into account what goes on in the minds of the learner (Ellis 1997:28).

Nonetheless, this approach has a setback. It focuses only on the same structure repeatedly. Thus, it devoids creativity as Chomsky pointed out (Chomsky 1959). He further adds that the approach placed similarity between humans and laboratory rats (cited in Mitchell and Myles 1998:25). Another important aspect that the behaviourists failed to deal with is the complexity of the structures of the language. Chomsky (1959) again criticizes when he says that children will find it difficult to master the language with limited input that they received and termed it 'Plato's problem' (cited in Mitchell and Myles 1998:26). Chomsky believes that in every child there is an innate ability to learn language, which he calls Universal Grammar. He further adds that the input a child receives is insufficient, as they will normally be exposed to 'positive evidence' and not 'negative evidence' as most parents will not correct the grammatical aspect of the child's language. Therefore, according to Chomsky, a child needs to have a set of prior knowledge to determine what is permissible in grammar (cited in Ellis 1997:67)

Cook (1997) describes Universal Grammar as the black box, a mechanism in the mind that is responsible for languages acquisition and allows children to construct grammar out of the language input that they get from their parents (cited in Mitchell and Myles 1998:42). Chomsky argues that human minds consist of two components: principles and parameters, and that these two components control the shape human language can take. Furthermore, the principles are unvarying and it applies to all language whereby the parameters possess a limited number of open values that characterize differences between language (Mitchell and Myles 1998:43). According to Mitchell and Myles (1998), Chomsky believes that in order for children to learn the complexities of the language with its myriad forms and structures easily and efficiently, they need

an innate guide about the expectations of the shape language will take (Mitchell and Myles 1998:44).

Second language, or L2, according to Ellis (1997) can be seen as any language that is learned subsequent to the mother tongue (Ellis, 1997: 3). He further elaborates that it can be a third or fourth language. Mitchell and Myles (1998) define L2 as any languages other than the learner's native language or mother tongue and it may include a third or fourth language as well (Mitchell and Myles, 1998:1). It is clearly understood that L2 refers to any language that one learns after the acquisition of one's mother tongue. Mitchell and Myles shared this view (1998) when they mention that it is the learning of any language if it takes place sometime after the acquisition of the first language (Mitchell and Myles 1998:1). Ellis (1998) defines second language acquisition as a way in which people learn a language other than their mother tongue, inside or outside of a classroom. Second language acquisition can take place formally, through proper and guided instructions (school) or informally through living in the country where the target language is spoken (Ellis 1998:3).

Krashen (1982) however has a different view regarding second language acquisition where he states that acquisition refers to the informal way of learning languages. According to him, a learner would 'acquire' language through the amount exposure he has of the target language with no conscious attention to language form. Krashen further cites that learning a second language should therefore focus on the meaning of the language rather than the form and that the input will lead to acquisition. Learning, he argues is the formal way of learning the language via the conscious learning of rules and form (cited in Lightbown and Spada 1993). Krashen further stipulates that for a successful learning of the second language, the conditions must be similar to that of the first language (cited in Crandall 1994). Krashen's view has a significant impact in the theories of second language acquisition. His 'Five Hypothesis' or the 'Monitor Model' outlines the various ways that a learner acquires language.

Second Language Acquisition (SLA) deals with process in which learners learn a second language. To map Universal Grammar into SLA would be to see the similarities in the acquisition of language. However we cannot really compare the way both learners tackle the task. Children learn first language for different purposes than someone who is learning a second language. Second language learners have acquired a first language and have with them a set of language parameters that they can fall back on or map it with the second language. Furthermore, most of the second language learners are cognitively more mature. What is similar is that both are learning a language and that both are faced with the complexities of the language and grammar based on the fragmentary input that they received from the environment (Mitchell and Myles 1998:44). Krashen adds that a learner needs to be exposed to comprehensible input in order to gain language. It is via this input that a learner gradually acquires language (cited in Lightbown and Spada 1993). According to Krashen, adult learners of SLA who are successful in mastering the language replicate the conditions in which a child learns the first language and that in order to ensure this 'natural approach' works is to be exposed to the target language (Scovel 2001). However, he further adds that input alone may not help the learners to gain excellent command of language totally. There could be a setback in acquiring the language due to the 'affective filter' shutdown. It is what Krashen explains as an imaginary barrier

that prevents learners from acquiring the language (cited in Lightbown and Spada 1993).

### **Cooperative Learning**

Johnson and Johnson defines cooperative learning as a form of collaboration, where learners working together to accomplish shared goals (Johnson and Johnson 1989) They further add that while collaborative learning happens in both small and large groups, cooperative learning focuses primarily to small groups of students working together. Davis mentions that students learn best when they are involved in the process and that according to research, (Johnson and Johnson 1989) they will retain the information longer if they were to work together in small groups (Davis, 1993). Davis further mentions that this form of teaching has taken various names such as cooperative learning (Johnson and Johnson 1992), collaborative learning (Barnes et al 1986), collective learning, peer teaching, peer learning, student team learning (Slavin, 1996) and reciprocal teaching, (cited in Davis, 1993, Ngeow 1998) There are only minor differences between these approaches. There is a fundamental similarity between all the approaches: students working together. Davis explains that there are three types of group work: informal and formal learning groups and study teams (Davis, 1993). Johnson and Johnson describes formal learning groups as a group that is more structured and stay together till the end of the task (Johnson and Johnson 1989) It is established to complete a specific task (Davis 1993). Whereas the informal learning groups are formed on ad hoc basis for a single classroom session and study teams are long term group with a stable relationship that provide assistance to each other throughout the study term.

In cooperative learning both the teachers and learners are actively involved in the learning process. Student interactions are essential characteristics of cooperative learning. According to Johnson and Johnson (1989) in cooperative learning situation, interaction is characterized by positive goal interdependence with individual accountability. They further add that in cooperative learning, the group will 'swim or sink together' (Johnson and Johnson 1989). Johnson and Johnson state important conditions for cooperative learning to be successfully implemented. The conditions are:

1. Positive interdependence
2. Face to face interaction
3. Individual accountability and personal responsibility to achieve group's goal
4. Interpersonal and small group skills
5. Evaluation of group's performances and effectiveness

Adapted from Johnson and Johnson (1989)

Generally, it has been proven that cooperative learning increases student motivation through peer support, encourages group work and develops interpersonal and social skills

## **Peer Teaching**

The best way perhaps, to initiate the discussion on peer teaching would be to understand the term 'peer teaching'. Various names have been given to this form of learning that include, peer tutoring, peer learning and peer assisted learning. The differences are in the instructions and the role teachers play. However, they share a basic similarity which is students helping other students to learn and in turn learn themselves. Most people will have a common understanding of the term 'peer'. There are various ways to define the term as it encompasses various elements. Free University of Berlin, when it introduced peer teaching in 1951 refers to peer as someone who comes from the same age level and educational background. Falchikov (2001) defines peer as someone of the same social standing, while a peer group consists of those of the same status with whom one interacts.

Coiro (2001) penned the term peer teaching as an activity that involves one or more students teaching other students in a particular area. Falchikov (2001) states that peer teaching is a variety in peer tutoring in which students take turns in the role of teacher. According to Wagner, as explained by Ensign, the term peer tutoring suggests the concept of students teaching other students in a formal or informal school learning situations that are delegated, planned and directed by the teacher (Ensign, 2001). Topping explains it as having people from similar social groupings who are not professional teachers helping each other to learn and learning themselves by teaching (Topping 1996b). Bruffee (1999) argues that for peer tutoring to be successfully implemented, the tutors and tutees must be real peers, that is, persons of equal standing. He goes on to explain that in peer tutoring, equality means the students involved believe that they will contribute significantly to the groups and they are unequivocally institutional status-equals (Bruffee, 1999).

## **Why Peer Teaching?**

The benefits of peer teaching (peer tutoring/peer assisted learning) are well-documented literature. NCREL says that research has shown that peer tutoring increases self esteem, academic and social development and critical thinking skills (Coiro, 2001). Whitman (1988) cites that peer tutoring will help learning becomes much more effective as learners are also teaching themselves (cited in Imel 1994). This is further echoed by Falchikov (2001) when she says that students learn a great deal by explaining their ideas to others and by participating in activities in which they can learn from their peers. She continues to explain that students will develop skills in organizing and planning learning activities, working collaboratively with others and giving and receiving feedback and evaluating their own learning (Falchikov, 2001). Damon and Phelps stipulate that peer learning is effective in fostering creativity, experimentation, problem solving skills and the learning of deep concepts ([www.ncrel.com](http://www.ncrel.com)).

Peer teaching does not only benefit the tutors but also the tutees. Studies in the U.K. have shown that 'tutors' have improved tremendously in the area of communication, reinforcement of knowledge, self-confidence and useful application of knowledge (Hughes 1993a. Gadsby 1993, Goodlad 1985). Research in the U.K. has also

indicated that 'tutees' find the lessons more interesting, enjoyable, and easier to follow and afforded more learning experience (Gadsby 1993, Beardon 1990).

Peer learning aims to promote:

1. Working with others
2. Critical enquiry and reflection
3. Communication and articulation of knowledge, understanding and skills
4. Managing learning and how to learn
5. Self and peer assessment

Nancy Falchikov (2001)

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The framework for the study was based upon a research done by Ms Audrey Lim in a local university on the effectiveness of CAI in teaching grammar among primary school children. The study follows her procedure, instrument and sampling methodology.

### **Procedure**

#### **Duration:**

The study was conducted in 8 sessions over a period of 4 weeks.

#### **Instruction:**

The students were informed that they are going to learn grammar differently and were notified about the study. The study consists of learning grammatical items that are yet to be taught in class. A consensus was reached among them to continue with the project. A Pre-test was administered to them covering a few grammatical items that are going to be taught in class.

A session was held to inform students about peer teaching and what is expected of them. The students were then assigned to groups comprising 4 members. The students themselves did the selection of group members. This is to ensure that they will be comfortable working with members of their own choice. Each group was then assigned different grammatical items to be presented in class. The presentation consists of explanation and handouts, sample exercises and a question and answer session. They are given one week to prepare for the presentation.

Presentation was held during class hours and each group was given 20-30 minutes to present their findings. At the end of each session, there is a question and answer session.

After all the groups have presented, a Post-Test was administered.

### **Sampling**

A group of students from the Pre-Science course in UiTM, Jengka, Pahang Darul Makmur was chosen as the experimental group whereas the students from the Pre-

Commerce course were chosen as the control group. Both groups consist of 100% Malay students.

The experimental group consists of students from various social backgrounds in Malaysia and their main qualification is Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM). The average grade in SPM for English is between C6-P8. It can be said that their level of English is quite low. They were chosen for the following reasons:

- i. The researcher is teaching the class Foundation English and the syllabus focuses on Grammar items.
- ii. The students are new to college life and that their motivation level is high and open to experimentation.

The breakdown of students is as follow:

- i. Female: 9
- ii. Male : 5
- iii. Total : 14
- iv. Average age of the student is 18 years old

## **RESEARCH INSTRUMENT**

### **Pre and Post Test**

A Pre-test was administered to the experimental group and the control group at the beginning of the study. The control group receives the normal teacher-led instruction throughout the entire study period. The topics covered in class and the amount of instructions are similar in both groups.

The questions from the Pre-test were taken from various English reference books namely from Thomson & Martinet and Hycind Guadart.

Post-test was administered after the experimental groups have finished their presentation. The test was conducted in the same week for both groups. The same set of questions from the Pre-test was used in the Post-test.

### **Interview**

Each groups was interviewed to obtain their views about the exercise. The questions that were asked mainly revolved around their perception of the exercise, their feelings towards peer teaching and whether the exercise benefited them. The kind of questions asked during the interview very much depended on how the interview went as there were questions that were used to prompt information from them. However, there were few basic questions that served as a guide.

### **Observation**

During the entire study, notes were taken down about their reactions, emotions, perceptions and participation in the exercise. The observation was done without the realization of the students.



**Journal**

The experimental group later participated in an exercise called “Reflection Journal” whereby all the students were asked to write their perception, thoughts and feelings about the whole learning process that they had gone throughout the semester (inclusive of the peer teaching exercise).

The Pre and Post Test serve as the primary research data in investigating the effectiveness of peer teaching. The information gathered from the other methods (Interview, Observation and Journal) are used to triangulate the data received from the tests.

**Research Analysis**

**Findings**

At the beginning of the study, the researcher sets out to find out the effectiveness of peer teaching as a method to teach grammar. A set of pre and post-test was administered to determine students’ performance over a period of time. The findings from the test were analyzed and triangulated along with the information obtained from interviews, observation and reflection journal. It can be said that the study has managed to find out what it sets out to achieve.

Question 1: Is there an improvement in learners understanding of English?

Pre and Post Test Scores

The scores obtained from the tests were tabulated using the SPSS software to determine the accurate mean scores for the tests. Table 1 shows the variables of the tests. Study group consists of 14 subjects whereas the control group comprises 29 students.

Table 1:  
Between Subjects Factor

Group	N	
Study	1.00	14
Control	2.00	29

The analysis of the tests suggests that a significant learning has taken place in the period between the pre and post-test. The learners score an average of 10% higher in the post-test. It goes on to say that peer learning has managed to help the learners learn the various grammatical items that were taught during the exercise. Table 2 below indicates the mean difference between the two groups. It can be deduced that the mean for the study group (29.5) is slightly lower than the control group (30.17). However, this does not suggest that teacher-led instruction is much better than peer teaching as the difference is too small (0.67). Since much has been said about the effectiveness of this approach, it does pose a question as to whether our students

(local) are prepared to learn using this methodology, as it appears the students in the teacher led classroom faired better than the study group.

However, this can be pointed to various factors such as academic background, prior knowledge, level of motivation and perhaps the time the classes were conducted. This would entail another study as to whether Krashen’s affective filter hypothesis does affect students’ language acquisition.

The analysis of the tests was done using the ANCOVA method as it allows for the different sampling groups, which were chosen at random. This is so as the students’ backgrounds were not entirely scrutinized to determine prior knowledge, intellectual capacity and exposure to English. ANCOVA was also used as the PRETEST was a fixed factor and serves as a yardstick to measure POSTTEST performance.

Table 2:

Descriptive Statistics

Dependent Variables: POSTTEST

GROUP	Mean	Std Deviation	N
1.00	29.5357	6.971	14
2.00	30.1724	4.268	29
Total	29.9651	5.222	43

Table 3 indicates that there is a small but significant learning that takes place between PRETEST and POSTTEST (30.995). However, there difference in terms of performance, between the two groups is too small (0.868) to be considered as significant

Table 3:

Tests of Between Subjects Effects

Dependent Variables: POSTTEST

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	502.345a	2	251.173	15.617	0.000	0.438
Intercept	640.442	1	640.442	39.819	0.000	0.499
PRETEST	498.518	1	498.518	30.995	0.000	0.437
GROUP	13.953	1	13.953	<u>0.868</u>	0.357	0.021
Error	643.352	40	16.084			
Total	39755.75	43				
Corrected Total	1145.698	42				

The analysis of the tests suggests that a significant learning has taken place in the period between the pre and post-test. The learners score an average of 10% higher in the post-test. It goes on to say that peer learning has managed to help the learners learn the various grammatical items that were taught during the exercise.

However, it is worth mentioning that the control group performs better than the study group. This is to say that the teacher-led instruction group fared better in both tests. However, the difference is too small to be considered as significant. This can be pointed to various factors such as academic background, prior knowledge, level of motivation and perhaps the time the classes were conducted. This would entail another study as to whether Krashen's affective filter hypothesis does affect students' language acquisition.

#### Question 2: Do learners find peer teaching useful?

Information obtained from the interview, observation and reflection journal seems to concur with the findings from the tests. Students have indicated that they realized there is a significant improvement in their understanding of the language and feel much easier to understand grammatical items taught in class. From the interview, it was gathered that the students feel that group work has helped them tremendously in grasping the fundamentals of English Language. They were able to work as a group effectively as each group member understood what was expected of him. All of them agreed that peer learning has helped them to foster good relationship within the group and develop their social skills and interpersonal skills. They know their group members better after the whole exercise.

In understanding various grammatical items that were alien to them earlier has increased their level of motivation to complete their task. However, the students admitted that there were some grammatical items, namely Modals and Tenses, which were quite difficult for them to understand and present in class. They were able to understand simple grammatical items such as Articles and Adjectives. This is apparent during the presentation of both items (Modals and Tenses) that students were trying very hard to convince their friends as well as the teacher. That was not the case when they were presenting simpler items such as Articles.

Another important aspect of peer learning that helped the students was that it alleviates their shyness in clarifying their doubts. In a teacher-led instruction, students feel shy to ask questions, are content with the ever popular nodding their head, and say, 'I understand'. However, in the peer learning session, students were actively asking questions to their friends and due to that their understanding becomes better.

Learners find the entire exercise as stimulating and beneficial to their development as students. They were required to conduct presentation in front of the whole class and act like teachers. Although at the beginning they were nervous and lack of confidence as admitted by almost all of them, they feel that the exercise served as a good base for their future undertakings at the diploma level. They stated that this approach is far different from their previous English classes and it is very refreshing to them. This is in accordance to what Statman (1980) has mentioned that peer tutoring can inject variety in an otherwise monotonous teacher centred classroom (cited in Gaies 1985).

The learners feel that at the end of the lesson, teacher should intervene and make the concluding remarks or summarize the whole lesson. This is because, according to them, they need to know that they have done a good job and that they have presented correctly. This could be seen as the need for positive reinforcement for them. Furthermore, it appears that there is still the need to have a teacher as the source of information.

The findings from the interviews also suggest that 25% (4/16) prefers teacher centred classroom above peer teaching. They prefer to have a teacher in front of the class disseminating information and believe that that way is more reliable. This suggestion came from the group of students who are slightly introvert, shy and were pressurized by the need to have a presentation in front of the class.

*The study has proven that peer teaching is effective in helping learners to improve not only their language ability but also interpersonal, social and cognitive skills. It can be said that the learners find the entire exercise of peer learning useful and beneficial to them.*

However there are a few setbacks to this approach:

1. *The learners should have some basic knowledge in English.* It was found that the major setback to this approach in this study is that the learners themselves are not proficient in the language. They undertook the study seriously and conducted researchers and consultation with the teacher. Nonetheless, they still found it difficult to express themselves during the presentation. Studies have indicated that tutors should have better knowledge than tutees. However, the tutors in the study were struggling with the basic knowledge of grammar themselves. This has deterred them from giving out their best.
2. *Lack of presentation skills* Legutke and Thomas (1991) state that learners need to learn to give presentations with the skills of a teacher, otherwise run the risk of losing the attention of others and information will be useless. (Legutke and Thomas 1991). This is especially true, as the learners appeared to lose interest towards the end of the exercise. It was later found out during the interview and reflection journal, that they lose interest because the presentations were dull and uninteresting. It was observed that the learners lack presentation skills thus hampering their ability to present their knowledge. On top of that, they feel shy to present in front of the class. These two reasons have become a setback in their quest for language acquisition. However, it must be understood that these learners are young and are not exposed to higher-level English skills such as presentation.
3. *Code switching to L1* Gaies (1985) state that peer involvement can be helpful in developing learners' ability to use the target language (Gaies, 1985). Legutke and Thomas (1991) seem to agree with this when they say that learners predominantly use the target language while they function as peer teachers (Legutke and Thomas 1991). However, that was not the case in this study. Learners predominantly code switched to L1 almost 90% of the time.

According to Valdes-Fallis (1978), code switching can be defined as the alternative use of two languages on the word, phrase, clause or sentence level (Valdes-Fallis 1978). When queried, the learners stated that using L1 allowed them greater flexibility in expressing their content to their peers. All the groups code-switched to L1 during the presentation.

## **CONCLUSION**

The study has proven yet again that peer teaching does help students to improve their level of understanding in English. Furthermore, the study also pointed out that the students have benefited greatly from the exercise and they have developed not only their understanding of the target language but their social, interpersonal and cognitive skills.

## **RECOMMENDATION FOR FURTHER STUDIES**

Peer teaching seems to be an exhaustive field of study and a lot of research has been conducted since the 60's. It appears to be a saturated field of study since everything you need to know regarding peer teaching is well documented. However, there are still areas, which can be looked into especially when it comes to our local context.

A case in point would be to look at the attitude of Malay students towards peer teaching. The study showed that the learners feel that peer teaching does help them in learning the target language. However, all of them requested teacher intervention at the end of the session to sum up the session. Furthermore, 25% from the study group feel that teacher-led instructions are better than peer teaching. This could be pointed out to the psychological thinking of Malay students that teachers are the main source of information and that they are the sole bearer of knowledge. In addition, the Malays are known to be shy and humble people and this has deterred them from participating fully during the presentation in peer learning. Perhaps a study should look into the perception of Malay learners towards peer teaching.

Code switching is an intriguing aspect of language and the study group code switched extensively during the presentation. Perhaps another study is required as to why these students code switched during the presentation. Studies have shown that learners predominantly use the target language during peer learning sessions but that was not the case in this study. Factors need to be looked into to determine the reasons for this phenomenon.

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