Effect of Cooperative Learning on English Reading Skill at Elementary Level in the Subject of English

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Abstract

Cooperative learning strategies are used for developing English reading comprehension among students in classroom situation such as jigsaw, STAD and CIRC. By using strategies of cooperative learning students can comprehend ideas easily in learning process. Reading skill is important for using and understanding English language. The purpose of this study was to examine the effect of cooperative learning on achievement, English reading of the Grade 7th students. Total number of students were 64 in both sections who were studying in Grade 7th in Govt. Girls High School Faizpure, Sheikhupura. It was a Quasi-Experimental study with a Non-equivalent control group, pre-test and post-test design. By using the procedure of tossing experimental and control groups were selected randomly. Experimental group was taught by using strategies of cooperative learning such as STAD and Jigsaw. Researcher taught the control group by using grammar translation method. Researcher put her best efforts for developing questionnaire with the help of text book and experts who confirmed validity of instrument. Data was analyzed through 21-version of SPSS, comparison of pre-test and post-test was examined to know mean score of students who were taught through cooperative learning and grammar translation method. Hence, it is concluded that STAD and Jigsaw strategies of cooperative learning has significant effect on English reading comprehension of the Grade 7th students. The findings of study and recommendations were described to improve students' reading skill by using cooperative learning techniques in English classroom.

Keywords: Cooperative learning, reading skill, grammar translation method

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Introduction

Reading is a basic skill of life that plays an important role in school and daily life. Student success in school and throughout his/her education career depends on reading. Reading is a type of semantic that helps a person to understand how to write accurately. With the ability of reading a person can get opportunities for individual achievement and successful job. Reading is an important area in the system of education and influences the abilities of writing and speaking (Bryson, 2003; Barrot, 2016).

Reading is a grasping, determining and collaborating activity which needs extensive time to grow. Readers need to develop more vocabulary for the flow of dynamic understanding in education. The purpose of reading is to get information at a satisfactory level for entertainment and research. English reading skill matures slowly by employing a range of strategies. The method of teaching English has shifted from teacher-based learning to students-based learning. This change has given an opportunity to both students and teachers for understanding English reading skill effectively. Researchers have examined many reading strategies for developing understanding while students read English. They found cooperative learning as the most suitable approach for improving reading skill among students that motivates learners to develop reading skill and to work in groups (Mustafa & Samad, 2015; Ning, 2011). In traditional classroom, a good student can learn confidently than weak students. The weak students feel hesitation to speak and read in large classroom. Cooperative learning is a strategy that enables students to help each other in developing vocabulary and mastering the content. By using cooperative learning strategy students participate in reading text actively, form collaboration with bright students who feel delighted to help their weak class fellows.

In traditional classroom, weak students feel shy to read aloud in front of their teachers and class fellows mostly because of lack of confidence and incorrect accent. Cooperative learning strategies used in English reading classroom to motivate students to develop their positive attitude and confidence in English reading skill. Teachers merely facilitate and guide   students to use cooperative reading strategies to promote reading skills and achieve goals successfully in a learning classroom (Stevens, 2003; Davakhana & Nazari, 2015). Similarly, working in a group and evaluation of students' work develop their learning by using cooperative learning techniques. Cooperative learning is an instructive condition where learning happens while at least two students cooperate to finish a typical assignment. Cooperative learning gives educators more choice than in instructor focused approach (Siegel, 2005; Haupt, 2015).

Theoretical Roots of Cooperative Learning

Cooperative learning is a strategy for solving common problems of language learning in which small group of learners work collaboratively to accomplish a collective goal. During group work each group member have to do work and responsible for their own task. Interaction of group members during discussion motivate and support each other. In this way, they can analyze group and their own capacity of doing work. (Johnson, Johnson, & Stanne, 2000; Marzbana, & Alinejadb, 2014). Theoretical roots of cooperative learning in social relationship learning guide us to use of this strategy for helping students to learn more effectively.

Social Interdependence Theory

Social Interdependence determine the way of interaction with group members to attain objectives by using different activities. In this way students help and direct each other to accomplish the assigned task. According to social theorists, students motivate and guide their group -fellows for their own common interest and enable to each other in the light of circumstance (Johnson & Johnson, 2005; Slavin, 2011). One of the most important elements of cooperative learning is positive interdependence in the classroom (Johnson &Johnson, 2005). As a result of social interaction team building activities promote for cooperative instruction and evaluation of group abilities during and after learning activities. Students grading or evaluation develop motivation for contribution to the group work (Deutsch, 1949; Johnson & Johnson, 2009; Barrot, 2016).

Cognitive Perspective

Cognition deals with how information receives and process in human mind. These theorists put efforts to find out how learning and thinking take place in mind (Slavin, 2011). Vygotsky described Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) determined problem- solving in collaboration under the guidance and directions of group-mates independently. He described group members work with strong association by using cooperative learning strategies (Johnson & Johnson, 2009; Vygotsky, 1978). Thus, Student centered approach can be used effectively with the help of cooperative learning method. They help and motivate each other by providing a guidance to develop critical thinking and theirs's performance development (Barrot, 2016; Colorin, 2007; Johnson & Johnson, 2008).

Motivational Perspective

Cooperative learning takes place in a group with motivation of group- fellows to meet certain goals. Group member are given rewards or punishment regarding their performance. In this way students reinforced themselves by seeing the others

performance and get opportunities of work hard from others who are rewarded for their best efforts. Bandura (1977), point out that students not only learn through motivation but also by imitation and by watching other fellows. (Schunk,2007; Taguchi, Melhem, & Kawaguchi, 2016).

Methods of Cooperative Learning

The important methods of cooperative learning are as under:

Student Team Achievement Divisions (STAD)

Collaborative learning is used for development of learning skills and students feel better about their achievements and their group-fellows. Therefore, during collaborative learning students encourage each other and feel their responsibility for group work. STAD is a strategy of group learning in which different type of ability level students work for achievements of goals. Slavin, (1995); Taguchi, Melhem, & Kawaguchi, (2016) described four or five students are assigned of mixed abilities and performance in a group. The teacher assigned a reading lesson, then students learn together and make sure that all students have learned reading lesson with correct accent and vocabulary. Students take quizzes independently on reading lesson and not share their knowledge during test. Students attained scores and quizzes are shared with others and compared with their past tests' performance. Student team achievement divisions is appropriate strategy to teach reading and language in the classroom. (Adesoji & Ibraheem, 2009). Slavin, (2014) describes four stages of STAD used in the classroom based on heterogenous grouping. Hence, by using of STAD strategy students improve their attitude towards academic performance and skills through interaction among teacher and class fellows.

During assessment students are not permitted to share their knowledge and skills regarding assigned material. Recognition of students are based on their grade in the test by writing their names on board. Students are granted with awards and compared their scores with previous results (Slavin, Lake, Hanley, & Thurston, 2014). Besides collaborative learning teachers need to be supportive and innovative in developing group learning.

Jigsaw

English reading comprehension is always difficult for student in the second language class. The teachers need to understand the students need and unique reading capacity. Jigsaw strategy is suitable for promoting reading skill by providing reading material through cooperative learning. They have to work hard to understand second language. Students using by jigsaw divide reading material among groups of students and

they attentively engaged in group activities. By this practice they resolve the problems of absenteeism and develop reading skill of students (Hall,2016). An intelligent student from each group read loudly before other group fellows and improve reading comprehension of weak students. The students do their work with responsibility and help their fellows in reducing reading conflicts. The English lesson is divided into little portions and allotted among groups. Students with same reading material discuss with each other their problems and share reading output with other groups (Slavin, 2014).

Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC)

Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition technique in one of writing and reading technique with three elements: used of activities for story reading, students centered reading comprehension and instruction of writing. Lesson of a day provide an opportunity for reading group to exercise reading skills in the class. Students read the lesson with in pairs and help each other in story prediction and summarizing the lesson. Students in groups exercise in spelling writing and vocabulary building by posing the question from teacher (Gupta & Ahuja, 2014). Groups of students are rewarded for their reading performance. The role of teacher is primary instructor who supports and facilitates the students in reading process. Teacher paragraph and text divided among students for developing reading skills, spelling and punctuation (Mustafa, & Samad, 2015; Sabarun, 2011).

Cooperative learning techniques are normally valuable for all mental levels and every ethnic groups. Student's views about each other are upgraded by giving them a chance to work with in a group (Taguchi, Melhem, & Kawaguchi, 2016). In most recent years, the foreign language teaching has been shifted from a teacher centered learning model to a learner centered model (Hall, 2016; Ning, 2011). English is being taught in most of the Pakistani schools. It is an important source of international communication, therefor it is instructed as a second language.

English reading is important part of language teaching. In traditional classroom where grammar translation methods are used for reading text and learning new vocabulary. Students have to face difficulties in reading new words and learning grammar skills. Students take English as a difficult subject because it is not their mother language. English is not only difficult for students but also an issue for teachers. Cooperative learning techniques can be more effective for developing confidence in reading English and use words fluently reading of students (Endeshaw, 2015).

Objectives and Hypothesis

The following was measurable objective and hypothesis of the study:

1. Examine the effect of cooperative learning on the achievement in English reading comprehension of 7th grade students.

H1: there is significant mean difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of students in English reading comprehension of 7th grade students who had been educated through cooperative learning and those who had been educated through traditional Method.

Research Methodology

This was experimental study to find the effect of cooperative learning on English reading comprehension of seventh class students. The Quasi-experimental design was used to conduct this study. Total number of students were 64 enrolled in seventh class in Govt. Girls high School Faizpure, Sheikhupura. The experimental and control groups were chosen randomly for the treatments. The researcher selected 64 students for sample. Using the procedure of tossing one section was allocated for experiment and other was allocated for control group. The effect of cooperative learning on English reading comprehension was evaluated by using validated and self-made questionnaire. The researcher taught the control group by using grammar translation method and facilitated the experimental group by providing reading materials. The treatment was continued for four months. Pre-test and post-test were conducted to evaluate the difference between English reading comprehension of control and experimental group. Thirty items were included in the test for checking reading comprehension of the students.

Results & Interpretation

Table 1
 Comparison of Pre-Test about Effect of Cooperative Learning and Grammar Translation on Reading Comprehension of 7th Grade Students between Control Group and Experimental Group (N=32)

Variable	N	M	SD	df.	t-value	sig.
Control Group	32	38.41	5.94	62	2.016	.48
Experimental Group	32	34.65	8.39			

Independent sample *t*-test was applied to find out the difference between control and experimental groups of pre-tests about effect of cooperative learning and grammar translation on reading comprehension of 7th grade students. Results in the above table 4.1 showed that no significance difference between control group (*M*=38.41, *SD*=5.94) and experimental group (*M*=34.65, *SD*=8.39) at *p*

≥0.05 level of significance with (t=-2.016, p=0.48) of pre-test was found. On the basis of these results, the research hypothesis that "There is significant mean difference between pretest scores on reading skill of 7th grade students in the subject of English who had been taught through cooperative learning and those who were taught through grammar translation method" is rejected.

Table 2
Comparison of Post-Test about Effect of Cooperative Learning and Grammar Translation on Reading Comprehension of 7th Grade Students between Control Group and Experimental Group (N=32)

Variable	N	M	SD.	df.	t-value	sig.
Control Group	32	41.38	10.98	62	-4.858	.000
Experimental Group	32	56.32	10.79			

Independent sample t-test was applied to find out the difference between control and experimental groups of post-tests about effect of cooperative learning and grammar translation on reading comprehension of 7th grade students. Results in the above table 4.2 showed that significance difference between control group (M=41.38, SD=10.98) and experimental group (M=56.32, SD=10.79) at p≤0.05 level of significance with (t= -4.858, p=0.000) of pre-test was found. On the basis of these results, the research hypothesis that "There is significant difference between mean posttest scores on reading of 7th grade students in the subject of English who were taught through cooperative learning and those who had were through grammar translation method" is accepted.

Table 3
Comparison of Pre-Test and Post-Test About Effect of Cooperative Learning and Grammar Translation on Reading Comprehension of 7th Grade Students between Control Group and Experimental Group (N=32)

Variable	N	M	SD	df.	t-value	sig.
Control Group	32	26.73	8.60	62	-2.97	.001
Experimental Group	32	34.43	7.58			

Independent sample *t*-test was applied to find out the difference between control and experimental groups of pre-test and post-tests about effect of cooperative learning and grammar translation on reading comprehension of 7th grade students. Results in the above table 4.3 showed significance difference between control group (*M*=26.73, *SD*=8.60) and experimental group (*M*=34.43, *SD*=7.58) at p≤0.05 level of significance with (*t*= -2.97, *p*=0.001) of pre-test was found. On the basis of these results, the research hypothesis that "There is significant mean difference between the reading comprehension scores of 7th grade students in the subject of English who were taught through cooperative learning and those who were taught through grammar translation method" is accepted.

Table 4
Paired Samples T-Test to Identify Difference in Mean Pre-Test and Post-Test Scores of Students Who Have Been Taught Through Grammar Translation Method

Variable	N	M	SD	Df	t-value	sig.
pretest	32	38.41	5.89	31	-2.39	.023
Posttest	32	41.42	11.84			

Paired sample *t*-test was applied to find out the difference between pre-test and post-tests of control group about effect of grammar translation on reading comprehension of 7th grade students. Results in the above table 4.4 showed that significance difference between pre-test (*M*=38.41, *SD*=5.89) and post-test (*M*=41.42, *SD*=11.84) at p≤0.05 level of significance with (*t*= -2.39, *p*=0.023) of pre-test was found. On the basis of these results, the research hypothesis that "There is significant mean difference between pretest and post test scores on reading comprehension of 7th grade students in the subject of English who had been taught through grammar translation method" is accepted.

Table 4.5
Paired Samples T-Test to Identify Difference in Mean Pre-Test and Post-Test Scores of Students Who Have Been Taught Through Cooperative Learning

Variable	N	M	SD	Df	t-value	sig.
pretest	32	31.75	7.48	31	-12.52	.000
Posttest	32	57.59	10.87			

Paired sample *t*-test was applied to find out the difference between pre-test and post-tests of experimental group about effect of grammar translation on reading comprehension of 7th grade students. Results in the above table 4.5 showed that significance difference between pre-test (*M*=31.75, *SD*=7.48) and post-test (*M*=57.59, *SD*=10.87) at p≤0.05 level of significance with (*t*= -12.52, *p*=0.000) of pre-test was found. Table 4.7 presents the results of paired samples t-test to identify difference in mean pre-test and post-test scores of experimental groups. It is indicated that no significant difference between mean scores of control group in pre-test (*M* = 34.65, *SD* = 8.39) and post-test (*M* = 58.32, *SD* = 11.69, *t* (33) = -13.23, *p* <.000. On the basis of these results, the research hypothesis that "There is significant mean difference between pretest and post test scores on reading skill of 7th grade students in the subject of English who had been taught through cooperative learning" is accepted.

Discussion and Conclusions

English as a universal language is increasingly being adopted by Pakistani natives. Its importance is significant in our curriculum as a compulsory subject for secondary students. The government of Pakistan is now trying to introduce Single National curriculum equal one and for all making educational standards similar for all students at elementary level which will further promote English language. Post-test result of this study described; those students who were randomly selected for cooperative learning group can read better than control group. In experimental group students were inspired to develop their reading comprehension in English by sharing of materials, description of reading mistakes and providing proposition for English reading improvement. For making CL(cooperative learning) successful, students need to be more attentive, helpful and socially interactive. The results of many studies showed that using of CL techniques during English reading provide opportunities of active interaction with different background students (Alodwan, 2012; Bolukbas, Keskin & Polat, 2011; Fekri, 2016). After using student team achievement division technique for

improving English, researcher concluded that students improved their vocabulary and accent. Researcher by using STAD plans some activities with the help of CL group to sort out reading problems in the subject of English. The results of other studies also aligned with the result of this study such as (Zarrabi, 2016; Soares & Wood, 2010) observed that STAD technique helped to identify the difficulties related in English reading from text book. If students were not able to recognized the words in the text, then researcher developed a reading group which helped weak students to improve their reading skills. The researcher explained the central idea from the text and guided students to find general idea by using skimming and scanning as strategy that is similar to the result of Coleman, (2011) who described that teacher prepare students to read English by using scanning and skimming process strategy for developing social skills and sharing of ideas.

The results showed clearly that Students team achievement division technique help students to improve English reading comprehension and cooperatively designed activities by exchange of vocabulary during group work. Therefore, cooperative reading not only develop reading comprehension but also listening and communication skills. The researcher concluded that cooperative learning help to develop reading fluency in English and engage students for use of innovative tools so that they read new text successfully. By using Student team achievement division strategy of cooperative learning help students and teachers to change grammar translation method into participating English reading.

Regarding discussion and conclusion, the use of cooperative learning techniques helps students to learn vocabulary words and develop positive learning environment. Use of cooperative learning techniques in the classroom inspire the students to develop their English reading and vocabulary in the group with other students, therefore it is recommended that head teachers should provide facilities and audio-visual aids in the classes so that teachers can guide students how to apply cooperative learning techniques in the class. The students of high classes may also use cooperative learning techniques to improve their skills and competency in other disciplines.

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English Reading Test

Maximum Time: 25min

Student Name   **Roll No**   **Section**

PART – I

Direction: Read the passage. Answer caption about the passage. You have to find the best answer of each question.

A. The villagers live in simple houses. Every village has a mosque where people offer prayers. Some of the smaller villages do not have electricity. The villages have green trees around their houses. The trees provide shady sitting places in the summer afternoons. Usually a small village does not have hospital, high school and post office. High schools are in nearby towns and bigger villages mostly people living in for off villages are not educated. A teacher of the village primary school takes care of the postal needs of the villages. He also read and writes letters for them.

1. The villages live in houses.

a. big   b. simple   c. beautiful   d. decorated

2. People offer prayers in.

a. House   b. Village   c. School   d. Mosque

3. Usuallyasmall village does not have.

A. Hospital, High school, Post office   b.   Hospital,   Mosque. Electricity

c. Trees, cattle, farms   d. Water, food, animal

4. Who takes care of postal needs.

a. Doctor   b. Postman   c. Teacher   d. Farmer

Read the passage carefully and circle the correct option of the questions

Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah was born on 25th December 1876 in Karachi. After being taught at home, he was sent to Sindh Madrassa -tul- Islam. At the age of 16, he passed his Matriculation examination from Mission High School. Later in 1893, he joined Lincoln's Inn to obtain the highest degree in law. Once Jinnah was firmly established in the legal profession, he formally entered politics in 1905. Jinnah believed in working for Hindu - Muslim unity. He always looked after the interests of the Muslims of the sub-continent were deprived of their rights. The idea of Pakistan was given by Dr. Allama Muhammad lqbal in 1930.

5. Quaid-e-Azam Was born in.

a. Lahore   b. Karachi   c. Peshawar   d. Quetta

6. Madrassa-tul-Islam was situated in.

a. Baluchistan   b. Gilgit   c. Punjab   d. Sind

7. At the age of sixteen, he passed his.

a. Matriculation   b. F.A   c. Graduation   d. Master

8. He joined Lincoln's Inn in.

a. 1905   b. 1876   c. 1893   d. 1894

9. Jinnah believed in working for   unity.

a Muslim-Sikh   b Sikh-Hindu   c Hindu-Muslim   d   Hindu-Christian

10. The idea of Pakistan was given by.

a Quaid-e-Azam   b Allama lqbal   c Liaqat Ali   d Ch. Rahmat Ali

Read the stanza and encircle the correct option of questions.

Not gold, but only men can make a

people great and strong:

Men who for truth and honors' sake

stand fast and suffer long

11. "Honor" means

a. important   b. respect   c. Support   d. make

12. Correct rhyming pair is.

a. make, sake   b. make, strong   c. strong, sake   d.   sake, long

13. Who make a nation strong?

a. People   b. men   c. children   d. girls

14. Men who for truth and honor's sake.

a. stands fast   b. suffer fast   c. stand fast and suffer long   d.   cannot stand

Read the given paragraph and answer the question.

As we all know foxes are cunning, clever creatures, but they can't climb up the trees. He saw that he would have to trick the rooster to come down. He smiled up at the rooster. 'How nice to see you' he said. 'I'm looking for a friend. Why don't you come down? We can have a nice friendly talk?

15. Foxes are creatures.

a. gentle   b. cunning   c. peaceful   d.   fast

16. But foxes cannot up the tree.

a. jump   b. take   c. eat   d. climb

17. Which is other animal in the passage?

a. Rooster   b. bull   c. dog   d. tiger

18. Fox wanted the rooster to come.

a. up   b. close   c. down   d. with

19. The meaning of "cunning" is

a. clever   b. gentle   c. horrible   d. danger

Read the given stanza and answer the given question no. 20 - 24.

Brave men who work while others sleep,

Who dare while others fly...?

They build a nation's pillars deep

And lift them to the sky.

20. While others _____.

a. go   b. wake   c. sleep   d. run

21. _____ men who work.

a. brave   b. weak   c. poor   d. rich

22. Who _____ while others fly.

a. care   b. near   c. fear   d. dare

23. And lift them to the _____.

a. tree   b. sky   c. roof   d. stains

24. The meanings of "pillars" is.

a. source   b. rule   c. base   d. power

Read the given paragraph and answer the questions

Guglielmo Marchese Marconi, another great scientist, invented radio and wireless. With the help of telephone and wireless, we can talk to anybody in any corner of the world. On television, we can watch a variety of interesting and informative programs.

25. With the help of _____we can talk.

a. television   b. telephone   c. telegram   d. telex

26. We can watch programs on.

b. telephone   b. telephone   c. telegram   d. telex

27. Radio was invented by.

a. Marconi   b. Martin   c. Newton   d. Cooper

28. Above paragraph is about scientific.

a. era   b. study   c. machine   d. inventions

30. The meaning of "Invent" is to make something

a. old   b. bright   c. new   d. solid