


COOPERATIVE LEARNING: Benefits And Challenges according to the English Teacher

Heri Hermawan¹, Syahrul², Ibnumal³
¹Univeritas Muhammadiyah Makassar, Indonesia
²Universitas Negeri Makassar, Indonesia
³SMAN 7 Pangkep, Indonesia

ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p>Article history: Received: November 21, 2024 Revised: December 03, 2024 Accepted: December 28, 2024 Published: December 31, 2024</p> <p>Keywords: Cooperative Learning benefits and challenges English Teacher</p>	<p>Cooperative learning fosters collaborative environments where students actively engage with their peers, promoting mutual support and shared responsibility in achieving learning objectives. The objectives of this research are formulated to identify the benefits and challenges of the implementation of cooperative learning according to the English teacher. A case study research methodology was used in the study. A case study is a technique that allows one to fully understand a topic or event in a real-world setting. It is a popular study approach in many different fields. A case study is a thorough examination of a person, group, or society in which the researcher looks at a lot of information on a lot of different things. Although not always, case study data are typically in a qualitative style. The effectiveness of a teaching method is contingent upon various factors, including the specific context, learning objectives, and the preferences of both teachers and students. While cooperative learning has demonstrated efficacy in numerous scenarios, it is recognized that alternative methods may also be suitable depending on the unique needs and characteristics of the class. This highlights the value of educators being open to exploring and adapting different instructional strategies to best meet the requirements of their students.</p> <p><i>This is an open access article under the CC BY-SA license.</i></p> 
<p>How to cite: Hermawan, H. ., Syahrul, & Ibnumal. (2024). Cooperative Learning: benefits and challenges according to the English teacher. English Language Teaching Methodology, 4(3), 533-539. https://doi.org/10.56983/eltm.v4i3.1700</p>	
<p>Corresponding Author: Heri Hermawan, English Education Department, Universitas Muhammadiyah Makassar, 259 Sultan Alauddin Road, Makassar City, Rappocini 90221, Indonesia. Email: herihermawan@unismuh.ac.id</p>	

INTRODUCTION

According to Slavin (2014), cooperative learning refers to a range of instructional approaches where students collaborate in small groups to assist each other in acquiring academic knowledge. He additionally explains that in cooperative learning, students are required to assist one another, engage in discussions and debates, evaluate one other's existing knowledge, and address any gaps in their understanding. The preceding explanation illustrates that cooperative learning entails the formation of small groups, wherein individuals collaborate to optimize their own and collective accomplishments. To summarize, cooperative learning is a beneficial strategy that can improve students' reading comprehension abilities

and encourage active participation in the learning process. It contrasts with conventional approaches that may not adequately engage all students or result in appropriate learning outcomes.

Cooperative learning, as described by Brown (2010), is a pedagogical approach that necessitates students collaborating in pairs or groups to exchange information. Furthermore, as stated by Johnson & Smith (1991), cooperative learning is a teaching method that involves grouping students into small teams, where they work together to improve their individual and collective academic achievements. They are a cooperative team in which participants must collaborate to achieve common learning goals. The notion entails constructive interdependence, wherein all members must collaborate to achieve the task, along with individual and group accountability, wherein each person is held responsible for the final outcome. By adopting this method, the classroom atmosphere will become agreeable, promoting an ideal learning environment that supports the achievement of both the lesson's goals and the team's goals.

The researcher is interested in examining how cooperative learning is implemented and impacted the high school students' reading skills because of the concerns about the academic difficulties they face today. After much pre-observation conducted, the researcher discovered that a large number of high school students have poor comprehension of the text's substance, little vocabulary, and trouble understanding challenging written materials. Since having strong reading abilities is essential for academic achievement, the researcher is driven to investigate the possible positive impact of cooperative learning approaches. The researcher is certain that high school students need a customized and cutting-edge method of instruction, such as cooperative learning, which highlights the relationship between cooperation between students. By exploring this topic, the researcher hopes to provide insightful information that will guide the creation of focused treatments to improve high school students' reading abilities.

Reading, according to Pang et al (2003), is about comprehending written material. The task at hand is intricate and requires both perception and thought processes, namely word recognition and understanding. Reading is a complicated process in which readers' perception, decoding, experiences, language background, mindsets, and reasoning skills all play a role in how well they recognize and understand written symbols and how they interpret what they have read.

According to Harris et al (2007), proficient readers employ the following abilities and techniques: 1) Accurate and quick word reading; 2) Establishing reading objectives; 3) Observing the text's arrangement and structure; 4) Assessing their comprehension as they read; 5) Making notes and summaries in your head; 6) Forming forecasts, verifying them as progress is made, and adjusting and assessing them as necessary; 7) Making the most of their prior knowledge on the subject and fusing it with fresh information; 8) Drawing conclusions; 9) Making use of mental imagery, or visualization, to help individuals recall or comprehend scenes or characters.

RESEARCH METHOD

The used of a case study research approach was highly appropriate for the objectives of this study. To effectively implement cooperative learning, an approach that offers a thorough comprehension in a genuine environment is required. The case study design facilitates a thorough examination of the implementation of cooperative learning, which was appropriate for investigating the many problems encountered by analyzing a wide range of data. Furthermore, it enables the discernment of effects on eleventh-grade students, as it allows for a comprehensive analysis of both people and the community. To summarize, the case study approach was suitable for this research as it allowed for a detailed examination of the implementation, difficulties, and effects of cooperative learning.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This data presents reasons why cooperative learning can be beneficial in teaching reading to eleventh-grade students, aligning with the investigation of teachers' perceptions regarding its implementation.

Extract 1. March 1st 2024

"Pertama itu peningkatan Keterampilan Kolaboratif, Siswa bisa mendapatkan manfaat dari pembelajaran kooperatif dengan memperkuat keterampilan kolaboratifnya mereka. Mereka bisa belajar bagaimana bekerja sama dengan rekan-rekan mereka dalam membahas teks, menganalisis informasi, dan memecahkan masalah bersama. Selanjutnya itu pemahaman yang Lebih Mendalam, karena dalam kerangka pembelajaran kooperatif, siswa juga bisa saling membantu untuk memahami materi yang susah. Contoh kayak diskusi kelompok, nah itu membantu siswa memecahkan kesulitan dan menyusun pemahaman yang lebih mendalam tentang teks yang dibaca."

"Firstly, it enhances Collaborative Skills. Students can benefit from cooperative learning by strengthening their collaborative skills. They can learn how to work together with their peers in discussing texts, analyzing information, and solving problems together. Furthermore, it promotes Deeper Understanding, as within the framework of cooperative learning, students can also assist each other in understanding difficult material. For example, through group discussions, which help students overcome difficulties and develop a deeper understanding of the texts they read."

This data highlights the potential advantages of implementing cooperative learning strategies in teaching reading to eleventh-grade students. It emphasizes that despite being commonly associated with lower educational levels, cooperative learning remains effective for eleventh-grade students as well. The reasons provided include the enhancement of collaborative skills through group activities and the facilitation of deeper understanding

through peer assistance and group discussions. Understanding these benefits is crucial for investigating teachers' perceptions regarding the integration of cooperative learning methods for teaching reading to eleventh-grade students at SMAN 16 Pangkep.

Regarding the benefits, the teacher specifically mentioned the benefits such as “it enhances collaborative skills” which supported by the observation result conducted by the researcher where in the category of Positive independence, it is shown that the students conducted mutual assistance and support between the group members.

Another benefits mentioned by the teacher is “it promotes deeper understanding”. This benefits is also supported by the observation result where in the category of social skills, the students manage to demonstrate the ability to their understanding from the reading in front of the other group in the class.

a. Suitability of Cooperative Learning for Teaching Reading

Teacher's views on continuing the use of cooperative learning for teaching reading vary based on individual contexts and preferences. While cooperative learning holds potential for enhancing reading skills, its appropriateness hinges on factors such as student needs, learning goals, and classroom dynamics.

Extract 2. March 1st 2024

"Pembelajaran kooperatif kalau diimplementasikan dengan benar itu bisa menjadi metode yang efektif untuk meningkatkan keterampilan tidak hanya skill membaca siswa, tapi yang lain juga. Namun, penting untuk mempertimbangkan kebutuhan siswa, tujuan pembelajaran, dan situasinya kelas sebelum memutuskan apakah metode ini cocok untuk digunakan."

"Cooperative learning, if implemented correctly, can be an effective method to enhance not only students' reading skills but also other skills. However, it's important to consider the students' needs, learning objectives, and the classroom situation before deciding whether this method is suitable to use."

This statement emphasizes the nuanced nature of implementing cooperative learning in teaching reading. It underscores the importance of considering contextual factors and individual teacher preferences in determining the effectiveness of cooperative learning. While cooperative learning holds potential for improving students' reading skills, its success hinges on factors such as student needs, learning objectives, and classroom dynamics. This highlights the necessity for educators to carefully assess these aspects before deciding on the suitability of cooperative learning for their specific teaching context.

b. Integration of Cooperative Learning Across English Language Subjects

This statement highlights the multifaceted nature of evaluating cooperative learning outcomes in reading compared to other English language subjects. It underscores the importance of considering various factors that shape the effectiveness of cooperative learning in different educational contexts.

Extract 3. March 1st 2024

“Pembelajaran kooperatif dapat itu bisa lebih efektif dalam membantu siswa untuk memahami teks secara mendalam, menerapkan keterampilan membaca kritis, dan mengaitkan informasi yang dipelajari dengan konteks yang lebih luas. Yang kedua itu interaksi siswa, pelajaran bahasa Inggris lainnya seperti speaking atau listening, interaksi langsung antara siswa pasti lebih banyak dalam proses pembelajaran. Namun, kalau reading, siswa sering bekerja secara mandiri. Nah dengan Pembelajaran kooperatif, itu siswa bisa berinteraksi lebih aktif dalam proses pembelajaran reading dengan mendorong diskusi dan kolaborasi antar siswa. Terakhir itu Keterampilan yang ditekankan, menurut ku pembelajaran kooperatif dalam reading itu fokus pada pengembangan keterampilan membaca kritis, analitis, dan reflektif, sementara dalam mata pelajaran bahasa Inggris lainnya, seperti writing, keterampilan menyusun ide, mengembangkan argumen, dan memahami struktur teks mungkin lebih ditekankan.”

"Cooperative learning can be more effective in helping students understand texts deeply, apply critical reading skills, and connect learned information with broader contexts. Secondly, student interaction plays a role; in other English language subjects like speaking or listening, direct interaction among students is more prevalent in the learning process. However, in reading, students often work independently. With cooperative learning, students can engage more actively in the reading learning process by fostering discussion and collaboration among peers. Lastly, the emphasized skills differ; in my view, cooperative learning in reading focuses on developing critical, analytical, and reflective reading skills, whereas in other English language subjects like writing, skills such as organizing ideas, developing arguments, and understanding text structure may be more emphasized."

The data underscores the need to recognize the unique demands and objectives of each English language subject when evaluating the effectiveness of cooperative learning. Understanding these distinctions enables educators to tailor instructional strategies to best meet the diverse needs of students across different subject areas.

c. Exploring Alternative Teaching Methods

Acknowledging the effectiveness of cooperative learning, teachers recognize the value of diverse teaching approaches suited to varying needs and classroom contexts. The following statement highlights the rate of usage of cooperative learning in the teacher class. She mentioned earlier on how cooperative method is beneficial, but afterwards, she mentioned about other methods which means cooperative learning is used along with other methods partially and not fully. Alternative methods offer avenues for student engagement, specific needs, and skill development alongside cooperative learning.

Extract 4. March 1st 2024

"Pandangan saya secara pribadi, tidak ada metode pengajaran yang secara keseluruhan itu lebih baik daripada yang lain. Setiap metode pasti ada kelebihan dan kelemahan tertentu, dan efektivitas pasti juga bervariasi tergantung pada beberapa konteks kayak tujuan pembelajaran, preferensi guru, siswa, dan lain-lain. Kalau untuk metode pembelajaran kooperatif, menurut saya cukup efektif dalam banyak situasi, tetapi ada juga metode lain yang dapat menjadi alternatif yang baik tergantung pada kebutuhan dan karakteristik kelas."

"My personal view is that no teaching method is overall better than another. Each method has certain advantages and disadvantages, and effectiveness also varies depending on several contexts such as learning objectives, teacher preferences, students, and so on. As for the cooperative learning method, I think it is quite effective in many situations, but there are also other methods that can be good alternatives depending on the needs and characteristics of the class."

This statement underscores the importance of acknowledging the diversity of teaching methods and the need for flexibility in instructional approaches. It emphasizes that no single teaching method reigns supreme universally, as each method has its own advantages and limitations. The effectiveness of a teaching method is contingent upon various factors, including the specific context, learning objectives, and the preferences of both teachers and students. While cooperative learning has demonstrated efficacy in numerous scenarios, it is recognized that alternative methods may also be suitable depending on the unique needs and characteristics of the class. This highlights the value of educators being open to exploring and adapting different instructional strategies to best meet the requirements of their students.

CONCLUSION

. Observation data confirms the effectiveness of these strategies in improving students' reading abilities and fostering academic growth. However, challenges such as group

management, equitable participation, and individual evaluation require careful planning and strategic interventions to ensure the effectiveness of cooperative learning experiences.

REFERENCE

- Brown, H. D., & Abeywickrama, P. (2010). *Language Assessment, Principles and Classroom Practices, Second Edition*. In Sifonoforos (Vol. 1, Issue August 2015). Person Longman.
- Harris, dkk. (2020). *Strategi Membaca Teks Bahasa Kedua*. LP2M UIN Sultan Maulana Hassanuddin Banten.
- Jacobs, G. M., Power, M. A., Loh, W. I. (2002). *The teacher's sourcebook for cooperative learning: Practical techniques, basic principles, and frequently asked questions*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. (2009). An Educational Psychology Success Story: Social Interdependence Theory and Cooperative Learning. *Educational Researcher*, 38(5), 365-379.
- Johnson, D. W., Johnson, R. T., & Holubec, E. J. (2013). *Cooperation in the Classroom*. Interaction Book Company.
- Pang, S. Elizabeth. (2003). *Teaching Reading Educational Practice Series-12*. Switzerland: International Academy of Education.
- Slavin, R. E. (1995). *Cooperative learning: Theory, research, and practice*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Slavin, R. E. (2014). *Educational Psychology: Theory and Practice*. Pearson Education.
- Smulowitz, S. (2017). Interview Guide. In J. Matthes (Ed.), *The International Encyclopedia of Communication Research Methods* (J. Matthes, Ed.; C. S. Davis & R. F. Potter, Associate Eds.). John Wiley & Sons, Inc.