COOPERATIVE LEARNING AND PAKISTAN

Dr Abdul Hameed Panhwar
Dr Tariq Umrani
Muhammad Tufail Chandio

ABSTRACT

This research paper presents a critical review of the literature on a structured team learning method namely, cooperative learning. The review aims to evaluate the effectiveness of cooperative learning in large language classes in the context of developing countries. Cooperative learning is not simply group work; it is far more structured form of team work where students work in an organized manner to master objectives of the given task. The theoretical underpinnings of cooperative learning i.e. social interdependence, cognitive and motivational theoretical perspectives indicate that it may be a very effective method to teach any language because it promotes social interaction which is very motivational aspect for the learners' of a language. Furthermore, cooperative learning, alongside improvement in social interaction of students, helps student develop their critical reasoning because social discussion are more likely to focus on cognitive skills. Therefore, empirical research into cooperative learning strategies focusing on their implementation in large English language classes especially is in line with the theoretical underpinnings of cooperative learning. Empirical research suggests that cooperative learning is likely to be an effective teaching and learning approach in large ESL classes.

Keywords: Cooperative learning, ESL, Classes, Structured, Group work, Communication.

INTRODUCTION

Teaching and learning of any language requires communicative atmosphere in which students can interact and communicate frequently to enhance their language skills (Sharan, 2011). Unfortunately, the phenomenon of large classes in developing countries like Pakistan makes it almost impossible for learners to enhance their language skills through interaction. Due to the large size of classes, teachers use the traditional lecture method to teach students, in which students seldom get opportunities to interact with one another. As a result, students cannot develop their language and communicative skills. Moreover, due to the competitive examination set-up in Asian countries, like China and Pakistan students consider learning no more than just as antagonistic

competition in which they have to defeat one another by getting higher scores in the examination. Consequently, students fail to enhance friendly and constructive cooperation through which they not only can learn, teach, cooperate and enhance one an others knowledge, but they also can develop their communicative, social-interpersonal skills (Du, 2012).

In this situation, the language teacher needs to use a fully structured group learning approach that engages students in interaction. Cooperative learning, perhaps, is most widely suggested structured collaborative learning approach that helps enhance students' interaction, communicative and interpersonal skills (Slavin, 1987; Johnson and Johnson, 1999; 1994; McCafferty, Jacobs and DaSilva Iddings, 2006). Johnson and Johnson (1999) advocate that for better and effective learning of language that enhances student cognitive and interpersonal communicative skills the classroom set-up needs to be replaced with the one which promotes cooperation, communication and interaction among students. Although cooperative learning is not specifically designed for language learning, it has frequently been used and researched in language class.

LITERATURE REVIEW

What is Cooperative Learning? In general, cooperative learning is designed to help students achieve academic excellence in small groups. In cooperative learning, learners master the subject on the one hand, and develop cognitive skills on the other hand (Kegan, 1989). They achieve the mastery on the subject and develop cognition through interacting, hypothesizing, deciding and categorizing in group and individual efforts. Furthermore, cooperative learning motivates students to solve problems relating to their academic subjects by discussing, forming ideas and opinions and giving feedback (Slavin, 1981; Kegan, 1989; Cohen 1994; Johnson and Johnson, 1994; 1999; Johnson, Johnson and Stanne, 2000).

Johnson and Johnson (1998:70) define cooperative learning as group learning in which group members strive to achieve the common goal by enhancing learning of one another through team work. The researchers further elaborate "the truly committed cooperative learning group is probably the most productive instructional tool educators have." For Slavin (1995), cooperative learning is a teaching-learning method which makes students work in small teams to confer and contend with one another in order to evaluate one another's existing knowledge. Cooperative learning, in the context of language teaching and learning, is defined as a teaching-learning method that actively involves students to work together in within-class mixed ability groups to achieve a particular

task or assignment in such a manner that all members of groups benefit from the team work equally (Slavin, 1995; Johnson and Johnson, 1994; 1999). Thus, Cooperative learning has been found and suggested to be an effective solution to a wide range of academic problems. It is composed of teaching-learning techniques which stress higher level thinking skills and increase "higher-order learning as an alternative to ability grouping, remediation, or special education; as a means of improving race relations; and as a way to prepare students for an increasingly collaborative work force" (Slavin, 2010:135-136).

Difference Between Cooperative Learning Individualistic Learning: In individualistic learning situations, learners work individually and independently. Their efforts are targeted '*toward a set criteria where their success depends on their own performance in relation to established criteria'*. The achievement or fiasco of other learners does not affect their points. For instance, in spelling competition all students work on their own, and only few students win by correctly spelling words or phrases. On the other hand, in cooperative learning situation, interaction is combined by positive goal targeted interdependence and individual accountability. In positive goal targeted interdependence, members of groups accept that they "sink or swim together." In individual accountability, each student is given a share of targeted tasks to accomplish for the group's success. For example, in a cooperative spelling class, students work together in small groups to support one another to learn the words collectively because each individual student's score is summed to form the group score on which groups are rewarded. This structure of group success encourages learners to help one another equally and honestly (Johnson and Johnson, 1994, p. 1). Cooperative learning promotes cooperation and interaction which enhances students' social, cognitive and communicative skills whereas *structuring situations individualistically results in no interaction among students* (Johnson and Johnson, 1999:72).

Difference Between Cooperative Learning and Group Work: Moreover, Cooperative learning is not merely a group work learning; it is group learning through attentively structured groups. Each member in these groups is not only accountable for his/her learning, but also the learning of other members. Therefore, they all learn by communicating and swapping information so that everyone benefits from one another's knowledge (Fathmanand Kessler, 1993; Johnson and Johnson, 1994; 1999; Johnson, Johnson, and Stanne, 2000). Group work simply makes students sit and work in groups, but the structure of activity and groups

are not always organized. Each group attempts to complete the task in its own way. On the other hand, cooperative learning strategies and groups are organized which make each group work in similar structured way from first until the last step. Furthermore, difference between cooperative learning and group work (which also promotes individual learning more than cooperative ways of learning) is emphatically stated by Johnson and Johnson (1999:72) in the following words: *Structuring situations cooperatively results in students interacting in ways that promote each other's success, structuring situations competitively results in students interacting in ways that oppose each other's success.*.

The details about the dissimilarities between cooperative learning and group work indicated by Johnson and Johnson (1994; 1999; 2002) are summarized in the following table.

TABLE-1
DISSIMILARITIES BETWEEN COOPERATIVE LEARNING AND GROUP WORK

S. No.	Cooperative Learning	Group Work
1.	Positive interdependence with structured shared/common goals. If one fails all fail because success is with group achievement not with individual achievement.	No positive interdependence, students work for individual rewards because they do not have common goals.
2.	Individual accountability: each member is given responsibility to do and share his/her group's work through different rotating roles, assignments and targets.	Students just work in groups with no roles and assignments to be responsible for. As a result, some participate some do not.
3.	Mixed ability grouping: groups are formed by the teacher based on different ability members in perfect proportion so that high ability students can help low/medium ability students and learn from them and their own teaching.	Homogeneous ability grouping: Students make groups themselves; therefore, no guarantee for mixed ability. Low ability students cannot get chance to learn from high ability students.
4.	All students share the given learning task(s).	No sharing; no caring. It remains individualistic work.
5.	Targeting to enhance each member's learning.	Aiming at accomplishing the assignments only, that is accomplished by one or two students in the group

6.	Process-oriented, directing students to more and more learning through different organized processes	Product-oriented, aiming to complete the tasks in one or other way.
7.	Enhancing collaborative skills	Focusing on completion of the task through group discussions, assuming that students already have the collaborative skills
8.	Has ready-made structured and experimented strategies to be used	Has unstructured strategies: students work in groups without any pre-decided steps.
9.	Aiming at creating friendly and cooperative atmosphere	Aiming at creating competitive, not possibly friendly atmosphere
10.	Students support each other and share candidly for group's success.	Students may not support each other honestly and hide information.

(Adapted from Johnson & Johnson, 1994; 1999; 2002)

Elements of Cooperative Learning: The most commonly explained elements of cooperative learning are five namely: positive interdependence, individual accountability, face-to face/promotive interaction, interpersonal and small group skills and group processing (Johnson and Johnson, 1998; 1999; 2009; Jolliffe, 2007).The first and foremost element for successfully organized cooperative task is positive interdependence. From positive interdependence viewpoint, learners have two responsibilities: firstly to learn the allocated topic/material; and secondly, to ensure that all the group members learn the same. The presence of positive interdependence in the cooperative group makes students perceive that they are interconnected with their group companions in such a way that their success depends on their group mates' success; therefore, they are required to coordinate their exertions with their group mates' efforts to complete a task (Johnson & Johnson, 1994:2).

Face to face/Promotive interaction follows positive interdependence. "Promotive interaction may be defined as individuals encouraging and facilitating each other's efforts to achieve, complete tasks, and produce in order to reach the group's goals" (Johnson and Johnson, 1994:3). Although positive interdependence results in face to face promotive interaction, it is more of a product fostered by 'the positive inter-relationships, psychological adjustment and social competence'. Face to face interaction is not only a verbal interaction in cooperative learning. It is promotive interaction, which promotes more and more interaction in different forms such as exchange of verbal information, help, encouragement and concrete stuff such as materials required to complete

the task (Johnson and Johnson, 1994; 1999; 2009; Johnson, Johnson and Smith, 1998; 2007).

In individual accountability, the work of each individual student is evaluated and marked individually and returned to each individual in the group. Each student is held accountable by group members for the share of the work he or she fairly contributes to the group's accomplishment. The element of individual accountability ensures that each member is a stronger and brighter member and has right to work individually in order to strengthen his/her and the group's information (Johnson and Johnson 1994; 1999 and 2009; Kagan and Kagan, 1998).

Interpersonal and small group skills foster and encourage coordination in efforts to gain mutual objectives by relying on one another, by interacting truthfully and clearly, by supporting and being supported and by resolving conflicting issues positively. For better results in interpersonal and small-group skills, students must be trained in social skills. 'The more socially skillful students are and the more attention teachers' pay to teaching and rewarding the use of social skills, the higher the achievement that can be expected within cooperative learning groups' (Johnson and Johnson 1994:6). Cooperative learning develops interpersonal and small group skills of learners and learners become fluent enough to become communicative and social by the end (Brown 2008). Socially unskilled learners cannot be depended to work effectively in groups. Different procedures and strategies should be adopted to train students with social skills (Johnson and Johnson, 1994; 1999).

"Group processing may be defined as reflecting on a group session to: 1) describe what actions of a member were helpful and unhelpful, and 2) make decisions about what actions to continue or change." Group processing makes students reflect on how organized and orderly they are working. Sequencing components of materials in the order of priority and processing them accordingly in the order of importance helps to achieve goals smoothly. Besides, members decide what action is helpful and what action is unhelpful (Johnson and Johnson 1994:4).

Johnson and Johnson (1989; 1994; 1999), argue that cooperative learning is a successful method of learning because it is based on positive and structured interdependence and promotive interaction that leads through other three elements of cooperative learning to a greater achievement. The outcomes of cooperative learning gained through its five basic elements (Johnson and Johnson, 1999:72) may be '*subsumed within the three broad and interrelated categories of effort exerted to*

achieve, quality of relationships among participants, and participants' psychological adjustment and social competence' (see Figure 1).

Figure-1: Outcomes of cooperative learning (Johnson and Johnson, 1999)

Positive interdependence and promotive interaction both influence each other. As a result, through a sense of reciprocal achievement, pride in collective work and the bonding that result mutual efforts beget a considerate and committed friendships. Thus, through the structured and bonded processes of cooperative learning, students start to care about one another and put greater efforts to achieve reciprocal goals of their learning. With the increase of care, increases the sense of individual responsibility to accomplish one's part of the work. Due to the group members' care for one another, members feel motivated and persistent to work towards the targeted goal and achievement. They all undergo pain and disappointments together; therefore, they become a source of support, compassion and encouragement for more efforts on the next tasks. Thus, all these socio-psychological processes incorporated in learning contribute to group productivity (Johnson and Johnson, 1994; 1999; 2009).

Theoretical Perspectives: Cooperative Learning: The main theoretical underpinning on which cooperative learning is based is socio-cultural theory propounded by Vygotsky (1897; 1934). According to his theory, society, culture, language and interaction play pivotal role in an individual's learning. Vygotsky theorized and empirically tested through research that children learn and understand more about a topic or an object when they interact with one another rather than learning individually about it. This process of learning, according to Vygotsky,

facilitates students in two ways: firstly learning and understanding about the topic with the help of others (more able) and then, constructing their own meaning about the same topic. Thus, they develop their cognitive and meta-cognitive skills. To justify this theory, Vygotsky exemplifies that a child first learns from parents and then from the social environment through dialogues, actions and activities and becomes able to attend school, which otherwise would not be possible if the same child is left alone to grow. Hence, cooperative learning is usually associated with theoretical foundations of the three main theories: Social Interdependence Theory, Cognitive Development theory and Motivational theory.

Social Interdependence Theory: From the social interdependence theoretical perspective, the effects of cooperative learning are fundamentally reliant on cohesiveness of the group (Slavin, 1987). This perspective binds group members as an integrated whole in which students help each other learn because they know if one falls, all fall. Therefore, they care about the group and their group fellows and come to develop their own identity from group membership (Johnson and Johnson, 1998; 1999; 2009).

Alport (1954) investigated how to effectively assist people with different ethnic backgrounds to live together more peacefully and found the three most striking conditions to improve interaction that results in larger congruence and greater productive associations. Firstly, equal status for all who interact is compulsory, secondly, they all must have some common goals to achieve and there should be official permission for cooperation (McCafferty, Jacobs and DaSilva Iddings, 2006). Aronson *et.al.*, (1978), implemented a well-recognized cooperative learning strategy, Jigsaw in a class having the same three conditions. Students having different ethnic backgrounds, each student has some different information to help encourage equal status and they were given to complete a common goal for all members and collaboration was sanctioned and supervised by the teacher. This study got significantly positive results for social interdependence with some exception in equal status. The researchers noticed that every student had his own level and information according to their level of intelligence. Besides, there is some criticism on the teacher as a sanctioning authority because according to modern teaching-learning modes, students learn better when the teacher works as a facilitator (McCafferty, Jacobs and DaSilva Iddings, 2006). However, the study conducted by Aronson *et.al.*, (1978), was not a failure and set a millstone which has kept developing since then and today we

have a well-designed cooperative learning that has come out after more research on its aspect of social interdependence.

Cognitive Developmental Theory: The cognitive perspective of cooperative learning emphasizes interaction among group members with the view that this interaction guides them through better learning, understanding and thus, better attainment. By interacting with one another, students develop and construct their own meaning of the topic and object under discussion by accumulating various viewpoints and concluding with their own views and understanding (Slavin, 1987).

The Cognitive Developmental Theory is associated with Jean Piaget (1959) and Lev Vygotsky (1986; 1936). These both researchers stress the significance of peer interaction and the importance of social environment for development of cognition and effective learning. Piaget argues that every person creates his/her own personal knowledge of the world around him with the help of his background knowledge about the world. On the one hand, how it operationalizes, and on the other hand what is experienced in living in it. His theory has been widely advocated to construct a classroom context in which learners role-play as they involve in real. Piaget's view about learning assumes that cognition grows through predetermined levels of developments which means every child must experience the similar edifice of cognitive development in a prearranged order. On this, Vygotsky differs from Piaget because Piaget regarded cognitive growth as pre-ciphered characteristics of a child's biology, which highly restricts the attempt to speed up cognitive development with the help of teachers or other more experienced and qualified individuals. Vygotskian concept of learning, on the other hand, relies on the socio-cultural context that exercises a gradual effect on the child's cognitive development through collaboration and interaction (McCafferty, Jacobs and DaSilva Iddings, 2006). Vygotsky emphasizes that the help of other individuals in the form of a collaborative action guide the individual and help him/her solve problems (Salomon, 1993a; 1993b; Daniels, 2001). Vygotsky believed in an active theory approach that focuses on socio-cultural interaction because it is socio-cultural interaction that helps students learn from one another and from adults such as teachers, parents so on. He suggests that one learns first through one-to-one interactions and then personally with the help of internalization process which leads to deeper understanding of phenomena (Vygotsky, 1978; 1986 and Blake and Pope, 2008). Thus, Vygotskian theory espouses gradual changes in the mental development of an individual through social interaction and language. He

conceptualized that learners constructed their knowledge by having communication with other individuals (Vygotsky, 1978; 1986; Daniels, 2001).

Motivational Theory: From the motivational theoretical perspective (e.g., Slavin, 1987, 1995; Johnson and Johnson, 1999, 2002; Johnson, Johnson and Smith, 2007), cooperative learning creates a goal structured situation in which the only way group members can achieve their individual goals is obtaining group goal. Therefore, in order to attain their individual goals, members must first assist their group-mates to help succeed the group. This help may not necessarily be in the form assistance in completion of the task, but it may also be in the form of encouragement and motivation given to the group mates to exert their utmost efforts to properly complete the task. Furthermore, cooperative learning strategies aim at rewarding groups based on their performance. In this interpersonal reward structure, group members praise and encourage each other's work. They would put any possible effort to encourage one another for the use of more energy to their work in order to achieve the group's common goal. Cooperative learning thus, becomes a motivational structure of learning that motivates students to concentrate more. In the traditional teacher-centred class, students usually feel suppressed and least motivated whereas in cooperative class, where students interdependently work on a certain subject, they feel positively motivated.

The three features of Motivational viewpoints about cooperative learning: goal orientation, reward, incentive and group dynamics have often been focused (Johnson, Johnson and Smith, 1998; Slavin, 1995; 1996; 2011; McCafferty, Jacobs and DaSilva Iddings, 2006; Johnson, Johnson and Smith, 2007). Goal orientation directs students to achieve his/her personal goal which is also the achievement of the group goal. The more an individual exerts efforts in his/her personal work the more he/she ensures the group's success. In a nutshell, personal goals of individual learners are interconnected with the common goal of their group; therefore group members struggle to assist and encourage one another to use their thorough-going efforts (Slavin, 1995). The feature of reward incentive is mostly linked to group reward which comes as an external motivation for individuals to work harder because they know their score will be added to the group score which is the sum of individual scores. Group reward incentive also encourages interpersonal reward incentive in the form of praise and encouragement which inspire group members to work towards the common goal as efficiently as they could

by working more efficiently on their individual goal (Slavin, 1995;1996; 2011).

Slavin's Integrated Theoretical Framework for Cooperative Learning: All the three theoretical perspectives have very clearly been presented by Slavin (1995; 1996; 2011) through an integrated theoretical model of cooperative learning. This model (Figure-1) presents all the three perspectives' developmental connections with each other. The researcher places these theoretical perspectives in a model that indicates the likely role each of them plays in the process of cooperative learning. According to Slavin (1995; 1996; 2011), the proponents of social interdependence theory, cognitive developmental theory and motivational theory would all agree that cooperative learning not only includes their viewpoints separately, but it also integrates them as a whole?

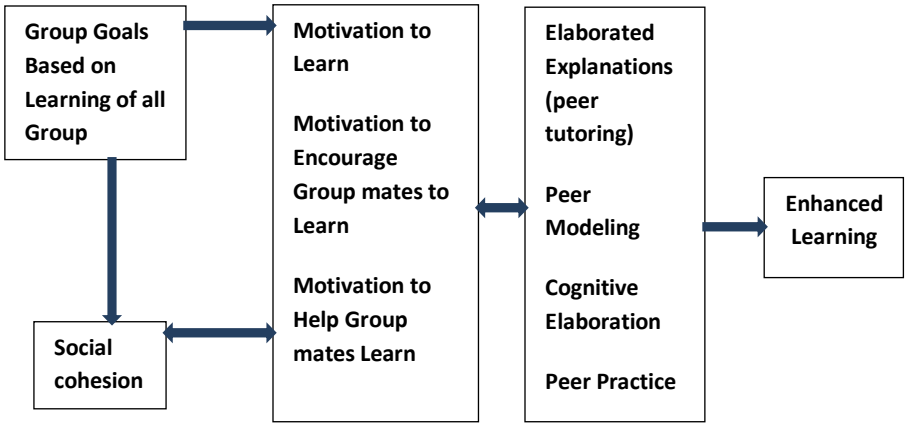

Figure-2: Integrated theoretical perspective model of Cooperative Learning

The diagrammed model of cooperative learning suggested by Slavin (1995; 1996; 2011), describes the focal operational associations among these theoretical perspectives in the cooperative learning process. The diagram initiates with emphasis on group goals based on learning of all group members. The model is based on the assumption that motivation to learn, encourage and assist others to learn, stimulates cooperative activities that results in enhanced learning. This would embrace both the motivation to complete tasks and the motivation to interact with others in the group. The motivation to excel other groups, leads to learning more individually in order to help other group members. Thus, strengthening the group cohesion, in turn, enables group interactions that produce enriched learning and academic attainment. All these steps are associated

reciprocally for example, the task motivation leads to development of the group cohesion, and the improvement got through group cohesion may strengthen the task motivation. Similarly, the cognitive development may naturally get elaborated and lead to augmented task motivation and group cohesion (Slavin, 1995; 1996; 2011).

Based on the theoretical perspectives, it can be assumed that cooperative learning can be an effective teaching and learning method for large English classes in Pakistan. For example, the present scenario in large ESL or EFL classes in developing countries, specifically in Pakistan suggests that these classes are crowds not the company. There are very little chances of social interdependence, cognitive development and motivation in students because classes are conducted through the lecture teaching method. In the lecture method, only the teacher speaks and students listen to him unaware of their surrounding classmates. Thus, students get no or very little opportunity to interact and discuss; therefore, much cognitive development is not possible. Furthermore, there seems to be no motivation for students to learn because the lecture method teaching keeps them passive and passivity does not enhance motivation for learning (Naidu, *et.al.,* 1992; Bughio, 2012). On the other hand, cooperative learning theoretical underpinnings suggest that the use of cooperative learning strategies in large classes could influence students' social and communication skills, cognitive development and motivation to learn more (Slavin, 1995; 1996; Johnson and Johnson, 1999). Almost all the cooperative learning strategies are developed to fulfill the requirements of its theoretical perspectives. Some of them, which are commonly used in the large class setting, are described below.

Commonly Used Cooperative Learning Techniques: Cooperative learning consists of various techniques developed by various scholars/researchers. Kagan (1989) discusses that there are hundreds of cooperative learning techniques, but among them most distinguished are Jigsaw (Aronson *et.al.,* 1978); *Student-Teams Achievement Divisions (STAD)* (Slavin 1980); *Think-Pair-Share* (Lyman 1987) and *Group Investigation* (Sharan and Hertz-Lazarowitz 1980).

EVALUATION OF EMPIRICAL RESEARCH INTO COOPERATIVE LEARNING IN LARGE ENGLISH CLASSES

However, the implementation of cooperative learning has largely been ignored in large English classes, both generally and at higher education level. The up to date empirical research into the implementation of cooperative learning strategies in large classes has gained substantially positive findings. Research suggests that cooperative learning is a suitable

method of teaching and learning for large English classes. The majority of the studies on cooperative learning in the context of large classes have investigated and argued that cooperative learning techniques have positive effects on the learning of students. However the implementation of cooperative learning is not found to be an easy task in the beginning. Some researchers have identified some issues and problems arising during its implementation such as noise, unwillingness and shyness of students and problem of evaluation (Chen, 2006; Warawudhi, 2012). They found that these activities enhanced student-centred learning through collaboration and interaction and also achievement, however, the shortcomings like more noise, mismanagement issues were noticed which disturbed the process. Nevertheless, these problems were minor before the success of the whole process. On the other hand, there are some studies which implemented cooperative learning and faced the same problems only in the beginning and noticed that these problems nearly vanished after some time. Thus, it may be assumed that the cooperative learning implementation needs some strategic paradigm like action research which emphasizes retention, reflection and improvement until the intervention becomes the part of a process (e.g., Chen, 2006).

Empirical Evidence: Effectiveness of Cooperative learning in Large Higher Education English Classes: The search for the empirical literature on the intervention of cooperative learning in large higher education shows that there are only a few studies which could be reliable. However, there are few other prominent studies (e.g., Wang, 2007; Jalilifar, 2010), which claim to have conducted their research in large English classes, the class sizes they experimented are far smaller than the class size used for the present study. Nevertheless, the large size of a class is researched to be relative; many studies in the context of developing countries have argued 40 or more students as a large class on average (e.g., Shamim, 1993; Hayes, 1997; Todd, 2006a and 2006b; Shamim, *et.al.*, 2007; Sharan, 2011). For example, Bennett (1996, cited in Sharan, 2011) states that thirty or thirty five students are considered as a large class. Todd (2006a and 2006b) and Shamim *et.al.*, (2007) discovered that teachers considered 40 or more students as a large class in the context of language teaching in higher education of two developing countries. Therefore, only those studies are reviewed which have tested the effectiveness of cooperative learning in the class of 40 or more students in higher education institutes.

The studies conducted on the implementation of cooperative in large higher education English classes have found that cooperative

strategies enhanced promotive face to face interaction, cognitive powers, motivation, positive interdependence and social positive skills (e.g., Wichadee, 2005; Liao, 2006; Chen, 2006; Basta, 2011; Du, 2012; Warawudhi, 2012).

Face to Face Promotive Interaction: The enhancement in face to face promotive interaction is perhaps the first advantage cooperative learning yields. Almost every empirical study conducted on cooperative learning firstly finds that cooperative learning strategies promote face to face interaction between students and teachers (Wichadee, 2005; Liao, 2006; Chen, 2006; Basta, 2011; Du, 2012; Warawudhi, 2012). Liao (2006), conducted an experimental study to investigate the ways cooperative learning differed from the whole class teaching on both cognitive and motivational measures in terms of grammar learning. The study's aim was to investigate cognitive and motivational perspectives of cooperative learning, and the results indicated that cooperative learning fostered peer learning through enhanced face to face student-student interaction. Similarly, Wichadee (2005), found significantly positive results for the use of cooperative learning in terms of reading skill development. Students believed that cooperative learning was an effective method to enhance interaction and knowledge.

Cognitive Development: On the whole, it is found that cooperative learning has been very effective method in enhancing students' cognition. The majority of students in Basta (2011), agreed that CL helps in attaining long-term learning skills, critical thinking and academic performance. For example, about 77% of the learners believed that CL helped them understand clearly, nurtured the practices of knowledge, experience and material exchange. The cooperative learning experiment improved a greater sense of efficacy in students to learn and perform and attach higher importance to the task than those who were taught through whole-class instruction (Liao, 2006). The researcher found that the students were motivated to gain and improve their capabilities by working with others. Especially in the context of higher achievers, whose scores showed that they instead of wasting their knowledge, tried to help weaker students which in return helped them consolidate their cognitive skills. On the other hand, the low achievers were compelled by the *STAD* structure in which everyone was to work harder and share to enhance their group's level. This ultimately helped them to improve their (low achievers) knowledge and skills, which is also reflected in their posttest scores. Furthermore, development in the students cognitive powers enhanced students' elaborating summarizing, paraphrasing, analyzing and

synthesing skills in their daily life study routines. However, medium achievers did not seem to improve much from the use *STAD* in this study.

Motivation, Confidence and Self-esteem: Cooperative learning not only focuses on students' educational performances in the form of interaction and academic achievement, it also improves students' motivation, confidence and self-esteem. The sociable and friendly setting of the cooperative learning strategies encourages and motivates students to wholly engage in the interactive learning process to help others and themselves (Wichadee, 2010). Cooperative learning maximized students' motivation, confidence and self-esteem. 74% and 70% of the learners in Du (2012) believed that their interest in learning English and confidence of expressing were strengthened by cooperative learning respectively. Similarly, about 70% of the learners believed that they felt respected and valued in their cooperative groups.

Academic Achievement: However, regarding cooperative learning's feature of enhancing of student academic achievement, there are not completely clear results. The studies reviewed show inconsistency in results. For example, Chen (2006), and Warawudhi (2012), find no statistically significant difference in the test scores of the experimental (cooperative learning group) and control (taught through traditional teaching methods) groups. In Warawudhi (2012), the findings of the tests suggest that the students of control group rather performed higher than the students of the experimental group. On the other hand, only Wichadee (2005), and Suwantarathip and Wichadee (2010), find statistically and positively significant differences in the test scores of cooperative learning groups/classes. The results of these two studies completely supported the use of cooperative learning in terms of foreign language skill proficiency. The test scores were statistically significant in support of cooperative learning. However, some students (Wichadee, 2005), also complained of the activity being time consuming, and had little to improve high achievers, but it was more useful for low achievers to improve their language skills. The possible reason for insignificant results in the test scores of the three studies may be the short time duration of study. One semester or less time taking research may not substantially enhance students' test scores. For this cooperative learning needs to be the part of curriculum. Moreover, this aspect of cooperative learning, perhaps, needs further research with a more planned methodological approach that might better not focus on the experimental or quasi-experimental design.

DISCUSSION

These studies, (e.g., Wichadee, 2005; Liao, 2006; Chen, 2006; Basta, 2011; Du, 2012; Warawudhi, 2012), could be taken as milestones on the subject of cooperative learning implementation in the context of higher education large English language classes in developing countries. Moreover, the studies have been more of a success than a failure. However, the studies do lack some important aspects to be considered in the future studies in the similar contexts. The first and the foremost shortcomings may be that no-where in the studies the researchers have pointed to the contextual adaptation in the strategies used, whereas, the contextual adaptation is considered where necessary for the more reliable results (Johnson and Johnson, 1994; Johnson, Johnson and Stanne, 2000 and Slavin, 2007).

Moreover, these studies have used experimental, quasi-experimental designs which do not fit in educational context. When a researcher selects experimental or quasi-experimental study, he/she encounters an overwhelming burden of responsibilities in the arrangements, planning's, observations and analysis for the two groups (experimental and control group). Therefore, the researcher's work increases and his/her attention remains divided, which might affect the proper and well-designed intervention of cooperative learning. We think the experimental design is not needed in the situation where the learners have already been taught through the traditional lecture method. Therefore, in this situation it would always be easier to cross section students experiences of learning through the traditional lecture method and cooperative learning.

Action research is, perhaps, the most suited paradigm to conduct educational intervention because it gives flexibility of reflections and repetition of the cycles of intervention. In the above reviewed studies only one study (Chen, 2006), has used action research in the experimental design of his study. The use of action research in a quasi-experimental design would further increase the researcher's responsibilities because then, he/she has to take more time on reflection and replanting the intervention. Lastly, the studies very least explicitly have pointed to the difficulties faced during the intervention of the cooperative learning and ways to address them. The proper intervention of the cooperative learning through the action research approach might explicitly have raised the problems and the methods to address them through reflections. Moreover, the studies used the strategies in their original form and did not adapt them according to the contextual needs, which might have made it difficult for the teacher to conduct intervention properly. For example, the

teacher's diary notes in Warawudhi (2012), pointed to the management problems which kept the teacher stressed.

CONCLUSION

Based on the review findings of the paper, it may be concluded that cooperative learning may be a very effective approach for teaching large ESL classes in Pakistani higher education. Since the ESL classes in Pakistani universities and colleges are very large, the article presents the argument that a structured approach to communicative language teaching may be efficient to control disorderly situations created by other forms of communicative language teaching such as group work in general. Hence, the researchers recommend greater use of cooperative learning strategies that create communicative environment and keep the situation under control.

REFERENCES

Basta, J. (2011). The role of the communicative approach and cooperative learning in higher education. Facta universitatis-series: *Linguistics and Literature* 9(2), pp. 125-144.

Brown, F.A. (2008). Collaborative Learning in the EAP Classroom: Students' Perceptions. Centre for Academic Development Communication & Study Skills Unit University of Botswana.

Chen, S. (2006). Cooperative learning, multiple intelligences and proficiency: Application in college English language teaching and learning. (A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement of the degree of Doctor of Education, Australian Catholic University).

Du, Y. (2012). Cooperative Learning in College English Class in Chinese Context. Contemporary English Teaching and Learning in Non-English-Speaking Countries 1(1), 78-94.

Fathman, A. K., and Carolyn K. (1992).Cooperative language learning in school contexts. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics* 13, 127-140.

Johnson, D. W. and Johnson, R. T. (1974). Instructional Goal Structure: Cooperative, Competitive, or Individualistic. *Review of Educational Research* 44(2), 213-240.

Johnson D.W. & Johnson, R.T. (1989). Cooperation and competition: Theory and research. Edina, MN: interaction Book Company.

Johnson, D. W. & Johnson, R. T. (1998). Learning Together and Alone: Cooperative, Competitive, and Individualistic Learning (5th ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon

Johnson, R. T., & Johnson, D. W. (1994). An Overview of Cooperative Learning. In J. Thousand, R. Villa, & A. Nevin (Eds.), Creativity and

collaborative learning: A practical guide to empowering students and teachers, 31-43.

Johnson, D. W., and Johnson, R.T. (1999). Making cooperative learning work. *Theory into Practice* 38.2, 67-73.

Johnson, D. W. and Johnson, R. T and Smith, K. (2007).The state of cooperative learning in postsecondary and professional settings. *Educational Psychology Review* 19(1), 15-29.

Johnson D.W. and Johnson, R.T. (2009). An educational psychology success story: Social interdependence theory and cooperative learning. *Educational Researcher* 38(5), 365-379.

Johnson, D. W. and Johnson, R. T and Smith, K. (2007).The state of cooperative learning in postsecondary and professional settings. *Educational Psychology Review* 19(1), 15-29.

Johnson, D. W., Johnson, R. T., & Stanne, M. E. (2000). Cooperative Learning Methods: A Meta-Analysis. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Jolliffe, W. (2007). Cooperative Learning in the Classroom: Putting It into Practice. London: Paul Chapman.

Kagan, S. (1989). The Structural Approach to Cooperative Learning. *Educational Leadership,* 47(4), 12-15.

Kagan, S., & Kagan, M. (1998).Staff Development and the Structural Approach to Cooperative Learning. In C. Brody, & N. Davidson (Eds.), Professional development for cooperative learning: issues and approaches, 103-121. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Liao, H. (2006). Effects of Cooperative Learning on Motivation, Learning Strategy Utilization, and Grammar Achievement of English Language Learners in Taiwan. University of New Orleans Theses and Dissertations. Paper 329.

McCafferty, S.G., Jacobs, G.M. and Iddings A.C.D. eds. (2006). Cooperative Learning and Second Language Teaching. Camb. Cambridge University Press.

McTighe, J. and Lyman F.T. (1988). Cueing Thinking in the Classroom: The Promise of Theory-Embedded Tools. *Educational Leadership,* 45(7), 18-24.

Sharan, Y. and Sharan, S. (1989). Group Investigation Expands Cooperative learning. *Educational Leadership* 47(4)

Sharan, S. (2011). Large classes, small groups A social systems approach. In Adrian, A and Gillies, R. (Eds.), Cooperative learning: The social and intellectual outcomes of learning in groups.

Routledge (2003). Cooperative Learning: The social and intellectual outcomes of learning in groups.

Slavin, R.E. (1991). Synthesis of Research of Cooperative Learning, *Educational Leadership* 48(5), 71-82.

Slavin, R.E. (1995). Cooperative Learning: Theory, Research, and Practice (2nd ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Slavin, R.E. (1996). Research on Cooperative Learning and Achievement: What We Know, What We Need to Know: *Contemporary Educational Psychology* 21, 43–69.

Slavin, R.E. (2011). Co-operative learning: What makes group-work work? In H. Dumont, D. Istance and F. Benavides (Eds.) The Nature of Learning: Using research to inspire practice. OECD Publishing: Paris, pp.135-160.

Slavin, R. E., 1987. Developmental and motivational perspectives on cooperative learning: A reconciliation. *Child Development* 58(5) Special Issue on Schools and Development, 1161-1167.

Slavin, R.E. (1995). Co-operative Learning: Theory, Research, and Practice. (2nd edition), Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Suwantarathip, O. and Wichadee, S. (2010). The impacts of cooperative learning on anxiety and proficiency in an EFL class. *Journal of College Teaching and Learning* 7(11), 51-58.

Todd, R. W. (2006a). Why investigate large classes? rEFLections. KMUTT *Journal of Language Education*: Special issue: Large Classes 9, 1-12.

Todd, R. W. (2006b). The Classroom Language of Larger and Smaller Classes.rEFLections. KMUTT. *Journal of Language Education:* Special Issue: Large Classes 9, 24-40.

Warawudhi, R. (2012). English Reading Achievement: Student Teams-Achievement Division (STAD) vs. Lecture Method for EFL Learners. *Journal of Institutional Research Journal of Institutional Research South East Asia South East Asia* 10(1), 5-24

Wichadee, S. (2005). The effects of cooperative learning on English reading skill and attitudes of the first year students at Bangkok University. *BU Academic Review* 4(2), 22-31.

———