(The Effect of Using Cooperative Teaching Strategy in Improving Reading Skills for the Secondary School Students in the Sudan

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Abstract

The study aimed to identify the effect of using cooperative learning strategy on students learning of reading skill, the sample of the study consisted of (200) students from the Sudanese secondary schools in Al-Duiem locality who were divided into experimental group and control group. The researcher used pre and post test to collect the data, where the results of the study showed that using cooperative learning stimulate students to learn and help them achieve their goals., The results of the study showed that the cooperative learning develops the social skills of the students.

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INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background:

Many factors involved in achieving competence in early reading. For poor readers, word recognition skills are critical (Ehrlich et al. 1993, Stanovich 1991). For good readers, other factors including meta cognitive skills and motivation are also important: Basic word decoding and perceptual skills are necessary in order to read. If a child lacks these cognitive skills, even the most adaptive attribution and self-efficacy beliefs will not magically reveal the meaning behind the text. Thus for poor readers, word decoding skill is highly related to comprehension ability. In contrast, for good readers who possess adequate decoding skills, motivational variables such as perceived competence emerge as influential factors determining reading performance. (Ehrlich et al. 1993). Beyond word recognition, fluent reading relies on lower-level cognitive skills such as symbol-naming ability (Bowers 1993).

1.1 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study aims at finding out the best teaching strategies that fit the Sudanese secondary school students and help them improve their reading skills. It determines the problems that face the learners in reading. Therefore, the researcher minimizes the problems that face them and find the best teaching strategies that help them read faster and better.

1-2 Questions of the Study:

1- Are there statistical significance differences at the significance level (α=0.05) between the level of achievement for experimental and control groups in pre test for reading skills.
2- Are there statistical significance differences at the significance level (α=0.05) between the level of achievement for experimental and control groups in post test for reading skills.
3- Are there statistical significance differences at the significance level (α=0.05) between the level of achievement for experimental and control groups in post test for reading skills due to gender.
4- Are there statistical significance differences at the significance level (α=0.05) between the level of achievement for experimental and control groups in post test for reading skills due to strategy of teaching.
5- Are there effects for study variables interactive at the significance level (α=0.05) at the level of cognitive achievement of reading.

1-4 Delimitation of the Study:

The study was conducted in the following limitations:

Place: Secondary schools in the Sudan.

Population: Students in the Sudanese secondary schools for the school year (2012-2013).

Literature Review

2-1 Introduction:

The best education systems train their teachers rigorously at the outset, focusing particularly on the practical teaching skills they will need. At each stage of their career, and especially as they move into leadership positions, teachers in the highest performing systems

receive further focused training and development ((Barber and Mourshed (2007), Auguste, B., Kihn, P., Miller, M., (2010)).

In the highest performing countries, teachers and teaching are held in the highest esteem. Rightly so, because all the evidence shows that good teachers make a profound difference. Studies in the United States have shown that an individual pupil taught for three consecutive years by a teacher in the top ten per cent of performance can make as much as two years more progress than a pupil taught for the same period by a teacher in the bottom ten per cent of performance (Sanders, W. L., and Rivers, J. C. 1996).

Teaching a language in a foreign context has some potential difficulties. Inevitably, such challenges should be uncovered to find solutions for the improvement of the situation. Thus, the constant communication with learners and teachers as being the immediate agents of problems is one of the main duties of the Ministry of Education. For researchers in the field of English language teaching and training, the basic

duty is to observe, find, identify and determine these problems through dialogues with English language teachers regarding the classroom situations. Hence, they are the ones who are able to generate some suggestions and solutions to the difficulties experienced by English language teachers and students contributing to the ease of connection of the ministry to the schools (Dörnyei, Z. 2001).

Most of the teaching in the EFL classroom still emphasizes teacher-centered, teacher-directed instruction. With a big class in teaching, teachers still make use of the traditional teaching methods; there is little interaction among teachers and students. Naturally, the teacher usually spends a lot of time speaking and explaining curriculum in class. Students are required to sit in their seats passively and listen to the lecture attentively. Students tend to memorize English grammar rules, rote vocabulary, and translation skills from the textbooks (Liu, 1997; Wang, 2001).

In these recent days, cooperative teaching is applied in almost all school content areas and, progressively more, in college and university environments all over the world, and is claimed to be an effective teaching method in foreign and second language education by scholars abroad. As well, it is generally declared that cooperative teaching approach is the finest option for all learners because it accentuates energetic interaction among students of diverse abilities and backgrounds and reveals more positive student results in academic achievement, social behavior, and affective development (Nelson, 1993).

2.2 Cooperation in Teaching English as a Foreign Language:

Cooperative education has shown to be an effectual technique for teachers and their students. Cooperative teaching activities allow those young learners to have more potential and opportunities to put into practice all of the knowledge that they have studied, as well as to improve their social and learning skills (Jacobs & McCafferty, 2006). It is also capable of helping students in improving their skills in oral communication (Slavin, 1995). Additionally, cooperative teaching is a highly significant teaching method which proposes an opportunity for those groups of students to work interdependently and obtain feedback from others (Jacobs & McCafferty, 2006). It is essential to apply the cooperative teaching method in English as a foreign language classes.

The cooperative group is generally three to four students who are joined by a common goal in order to achieve the task and to incorporate with each and every group member. Cooperative groups are appropriate for all ages, subject areas, and types of students. Regardless

of age, almost everyone loves to socialise, be with others, and to work together (Rimmerman, 1996).

One fear English language teachers have in concern of using cooperative teaching method is that low status students will not take part or that high status students will take over the group. Therefore, English language Teachers must form groups which are reasonable so that all students participate fully and use multiple-ability strategies (Cohen, 1998) if cooperative teaching is to work. Cohen (1998) mentioned that teachers also must convince their students of three things: those unusual intellectual abilities are involved in cooperative learning, that no one student has all of the abilities needed, but that each member of the group will have some of the abilities.

Table (1) Cooperative Learning Vs Traditional Learning:

COOPERATIVE LEARNING GROUPS	TRADITIONAL LEARNING GROUPS
Positive interdependence	No positive interdependence
Individual accountability	No individual accountability
Cooperative skill instruction	No cooperative skill instruction
Concern for peer learning	Little concern for peer learning
Heterogeneous groups	Homogeneous groups
Teacher selected groups	Student selected groups
Student reflection and goal setting	Student selected groups
Teacher observation and feedback	No teacher observation and feedback
Equal opportunity for success	Uniform standard for success

(Taken from Putnam, Joyce (1997) cooperative learning in Diverse Classroom Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Merrill)

2.3 Elements of Cooperative Teaching:

1- Positive Independence:

Positive interdependence is generating the sense that group members study the given material and guarantee that all members of the group learn the assigned material. Group members have to identify that they connect to each other in a way or another, in which one cannot thrive except if everyone succeeds (Johnson & Johnson, 1994).

2- Face-to- Face Interaction:

Face-to-face communication is described by Johnson and Johnson (1994), as students promote and help each other's, make efforts to accomplish, complete tasks, and generate in order to get to the group's main objectives. Face-to-face interaction is also considered as a way which through encouraging and motivating communication among students, where members turn out to be personally committed to each other as well as to their joint goals (Glanz, 2004).

3- Individual Accountability:

Individual accountability is the aspect that provided for each member of a group to evaluate against a standard and hold responsibility for their contribution to achieve goals (Johnson & Johnson, 1994). Individual accountability is the solution to guarantee that each

group member is reinforced throughout group work. The existences of individual accountability permits students have more motivation to learn (Kagan & Kagan, 1998).

4- Interpersonal and Small Group Skill:

The interpersonal and small group skill is regarding teachers giving beneficial response, reaching an agreement, and relating to each and every member, which is significant for efficient group functioning (Johnson & Johnson, 1994). When those learners take part repeatedly in cooperative activities, all students get enduring intellectual abilities (Huss, 2006).

2.4.1Teacher's Roles in Cooperative Learning :

Teachers' role is considered as an important aspect in assisting groups to function well. In a cooperative learning classroom, teachers ought to be facilitators, guide on the side and take more skills than they use teacher-fronted instruction (Zhang, 2010).

Teachers speak fewer than in teacher-fronted classes (Jocob, 2006). They arrange students for the assigned tasks which they will carry out, in addition, they support students with the learning assignment, and they give less command, imposing less disciplinary control (Harel, 1992).

2.4.2 Students' Roles in Cooperative Learning:

A student has five roles in a cooperative class: (a) facilitator: which is the students who is responsible of coordinating the group's works; (b) recorder: whose duty is recording what the group has achieved; (c) reporter: who is responsible to tell the students about the group's work; (d) timekeeper: whose duty is to help his/her group to be fully prepared of time constraints, and follows up with the group in accomplishing their tasks, as well as the responsibility to fill in for missing group members; (e) observer: which observes collaborative skill, and makes sure that group members are using a specific collaborative skill deemed important to the group's interaction (Jacob, 2006)

Methodology:

3-1 Method and Procedure:

This part deals with a description of the study methodology, population and sample in addition to the chosen method and the tools used to collect data. It also contains the procedures of construction or development necessary to ensure its veracity and consistency. Furthermore, practical procedures and statistical processing are used in the treatment of the study data as follows:

3-2 Study Methodology:

The researcher used descriptive an analytical method which is based on data collection, classification, organization, and analysis.

3-3 Study Population:

Population of the study consists of all secondary school students in the Sudan in the academic year (2013- 2014).

3-4 Study Sample :

Study sample consists of (200) male and female students in secondary schools in Al-Duiem locality. The subjects were selected randomly, half of them learned by traditional strategy and the other half learned by cooperative strategy .

Table (1) shows study sample distribution according to gender, groups and classes

Groups	Male		Female		Total	
	Class Numbers	Students Numbers	Class Numbers	Students Numbers	Class Numbers	Students Numbers
Control Group	2	50	2	50	4	100
Experimental Group	2	50	2	50	4	100
Total	4	100	4	100	8	200

3-5 Study Tools :

For achieving the study aims, the researcher uses achievement test constructed in reading skills due to the secondary schools curriculum exams using the same question in pre and post test.

3-6 Test Validity:

Test paragraphs authenticity verification by submitting it to (11) arbitrator arbitrators express their opinions; observations and suggestions research has taken additional notes on paragraphs and made amendments required.

3-7**Test Reliability:**

Educational material has been taught by using cooperative strategy for secondary school students males and females, according to the plans listed. Test has been applied on exploratory outside study sample consisted of (50) students, and reliability of Pearson correlation was (0, 89) that was high percent and suitable for making the research.

Data Analysis and Discussion

4-1 Data analysis and Discussion Results:

After revealing results of the study which aimed to discover the effects of using cooperative strategy for improving reading skills in English language for students in the secondary schools .The researcher here discussed the results due to the questions of the study.

4.1.1 Firstly Results Related to the First Question :

Are there statistical significance differences at the significance level (α=0.05) between the level of achievement for experimental and control groups in pre test for reading skills.

For answering the question ,the researcher used means and standard deviation to see the statistically significant differences between student's academic achievement in control and experimental group then used Two Way Anova to show the statistically significant differences for experimental group due to gender, strategy and interactive between gender and strategy at the significance level (α=0.05).

Table (2)

Means and standard deviation for students in both groups at pre test

Groups	Means	Standard Deviation
Control	16.22	2.75
Experimental	16.13	2.58

Table (**2**) shows there are no statistically significant differences at the significance level (α=0.05) for academic achievement between experimental and control group in pre test in which experimental group means was (16.22) and standard deviation (2.75) while control group means was (16.13) and standard deviation was (2.58).

Table (3): Two Way Anova for (strategy and gender) and their interactive effect at pre test

Variance	Squares total	Coefficient Degree	Squares Mean	F value	Statistical Significant
Strategy	0.405	1	0.45	0.057	0.811
Gender	17.405	1	17.405	2.462	0.118
Interactive	1.445	1	1.445	0.204	0.652
Wrong	1385.620	196	7.069		
Total	1404.875	199	7.060		

Table (**3**) shows there are no statistically significant differences due to strategy, gender and their interactive at the significance level (α=0.05) at pre test that proved there are consistency between experimental and control group

4.1.2 Secondly Results Related to Second Question:

Are there statistical significance differences at the significance level (α=0.05) between the level of achievement for experimental and control groups in post test for reading skills.

For answering the second question the researcher used means and standard deviation for study variables, gender and strategy .

Table (4): Means and standard deviation for students mark in experimental and control group in post test

Cooperative		Traditional		Strategy / Gender
Standard deviation	Means	Standard deviation	Means	
2.29	16.56	2.45	15.58	Male
1.99	17.68	3.40	16.16	Female
2.21	17.12	2.76	15.87	Total

According to the results in table (**4**) due to variables of the study (strategy and gender) there are statistically significant differences at the significance level (α=0.05) between control group academic achievement which mean was (15.87) and standard deviation was (2.76) while experimental group means was (17.12) and stander deviation was (2.21) in favor of experimental group and strategy of teaching, the table also shows means of female was (17.68) while male was (16.56) that clarifies there are statistically significant differences in favor of female in experimental group.

4.1.3 Thirdly Results Related to the Third Question:

Are there statistical significance differences at the significance level (α=0.05) between the level of achievement for experimental and control groups in post test for reading skills due to gender.

For answering the question the researcher used Two Way Anova to see the statistically significant differences for cognitive achievement of reading experimental group due to gender.

Table (5): Two Way Anova for Gender

Variance	Squares total	Coefficient Degree	Squares Mean	F value	Statistical Significant
Between the groups	36.125	1	36.125	*5.589	0.019
In the group	1279.87	198	6.464		
Total	1315.995	199			

Statically significance differences at statistical level (α=0.05)

Two way Anova analysis shows that there are statically significance differences at statistical level (α=0.05) due to gender in which F value was (5.589) that value was statistically significant at statistical level (0.019).

4.1.4 Fourthly Results Related to Fourth Question:

Are there statistical significance differences at the significance level (α=0.05) between the level of achievement for experimental and control groups in post test for reading skills due to strategy of teaching.

For answering the question the researcher used Two Way Anova to see the statistically significant differences for cognitive achievement of reading experimental group due to strategy of teaching.

Table (6): Two Way Anova for Strategy of Teaching

Variance	Squares total	Coefficient Degree	Squares Mean	F value	Statistical Significant
Between the groups	78.125	1	78.125	12.496	0.001
In the group	123.87	198	6.252		
Total	1315.995	199			

Statically significance differences at statistical level (α=0.05)

Two way Anova analysis shows there are statically significance differences at statistical level (α=0.05) due to strategy of teaching in favor of female which F value was (12.496) that value was statistically significant at statistical level (0.001)

4.1.5 Fifthly Results Related to Fifth Question:

Are there any effects for the study variables interaction at the significance level (α=0.05) at the level of cognitive achievement of reading.

For answering the question ,the research used Two Way Anova to see the statistically significant differences for interactive between strategy and gender interactive at the significance level (α=0.05)

Table (7) Two Way Anova for study sample marks according to study variables strategy and gender

Variance	Squares total	Coefficient Degree	Squares Mean	F value	Statistical Significant
Gender	36.215	1	36.125	5.910	0.16
Strategy	78.125	1	78.125	12.781	0.001
Interactive	3.645	1	3.645	0.596	0.441
Wrong	1198.1	196	6.113		
Total	1315.995	196			

Statically significance differences at statistical level (α=0.05)

Two way Anova analysis shows that there are statically significance differences at statistical level (α=0.05) for interactive between gender and strategy in which F value was (0.596) that value was statistically significant at statistical level (α=0.05).

4.2 Discussion of the Results:

4.2.1 Discussion of the results related to the second question:

Are there statistical significance differences at the significance level (α=0.05) between the level of achievement for experimental and control groups in post test for reading skills.

The results of the study show that there are statistically significance differences between experimental group cognitive achievements in which mean was (15.87) and experimental group mean was (17.12) in favor of experimental group.

4.2.2 Discussion of the Results Related to Third Question: Are there statistical significance differences at the significance level (α=0.05) between the level of achievement for experimental and control groups in post test for reading skills due to gender.

Results of post test analysis showed that female in experimental group were better than male with statistical significance level (α=0.05).

4.2.3 Discussion of the Results Related to Fourth Question:

Are there statistical significance differences at the significance level (α=0.05) between the level of achievement for experimental and control groups in post test for reading skills due to strategy of teaching?

Results of the study showed that there are statistical significance differences at the significance level (α=0.05) due to strategy of teaching , experimental group whom using cooperative strategy results were better than control group whom using traditional strategy in post test.

4.2.4 Discussion of the Result Related to Fifth Question:

Are there any effects for study variables at the significance level (α=0.05) at the level of cognitive achievement of reading?

The results of two way nova revealed that there are statistical significance differences between means of cognitive achievement proved and there are interactive between cooperative strategy and gender due to gender and the differences were in favor of female in which means of female results in tests paragraphs were higher than male in which female mean was (17.68).

Summary, Results and Recommendations

5-1 Summary:

After discussing the results, the researcher tries to converse the finding, illustrate the summary and propose the recommendations based on the results of the study.

The results of the study show that there are no statistically significant differences at the significance level (α=0.05) for academic achievement between experimental and control group in pre test because all the students learn through the same strategies of teaching traditional strategy so all the students have equal level. The results of the study also show that there are statistically significant differences for (strategy and gender) at the significance level (α=0.05) between control group academic achievement in favor of experimental group and strategy of teaching that means the effectiveness of using cooperative strategy in teaching reading skills. The results of the study indicate that there are statically significance differences at statistical level (α=0.05) due to gender in favor of female that means the female students are more ambitious for learning and they are influenced by using cooperative strategy. The results of the study shows that there are statically significance differences at statistical level (α=0.05) for interaction between gender and strategy that proved the effect of using of cooperative strategy in developing their students skills through creative reading and using cooperative in teaching gives students motivation for learning.

5-2 Results of the Study :

Due to the analysis, the study comes to the following results:

1. The Cooperative Teaching Strategy enhance students' reading ability.
2. The Cooperative Teaching Strategy motivate students to work together to achieve their learning aims.
3. The Cooperative Teaching Strategy motivate students to give in their best effort to achieve the group's sess.
4. The Cooperative Teaching Strategy motivate students to work on their social interactions.
5. Without a tool to organize their thoughts, young learners will not be motivated to understand the content of the reading text.
6. Students learn better when they are enjoying themselves. The best students are the happiest students.
7. Conducting the Classroom Action Research open a new horizon on teaching English.

5-3 The Conclusion:

The study revealed the following:

1- The study subjects agreed about the advantages of the cooperative teaching strategy.
2- The study subjects were sure about the development of their reading skills through cooperative strategy.

5-4 Recommendations of the study:

Based on the results of this study, the researcher presents the following recommendations:

1. Diversity of using co-operative strategy of teaching between the educational and traditional cooperative strategy in the Sudanese secondary schools.
2. Teachers should be trained to use cooperative strategy in teaching English.
3. Providing teachers with the educational cooperative strategy which is associated with the curriculum because teachers need it for teaching English language.
4. Work on impeding the yearly, quarterly and daily plans different cooperative strategies appropriate with the context.

5. Conducting another studies to recognize the effects of cooperative strategies and the effectiveness in the different educational levels in another school materials.

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